

BEFORE THE
CALIFORNIA BUREAU OF STATE AUDITS (BSA)

In the matter of

Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC)
Applicant Review Panel (ARP) Public Meeting

555 Capitol Mall, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814

TUESDAY, August 17, 2010
9:15 A.M.

Reported by:
Peter Petty

APPEARANCES

Members Present

Nasir Ahmadi, Meeting Chair

Mary Camacho, Vice Chair

Kerri Spano, Panel Member

Staff Present

Donna Neville, Panel Counsel

Diane Hamel, Executive Secretary

Interviewees

Roy Arthur Salume

Julian Ming Leichty

INDEX

PAGE

Roy Arthur Salume

4

Julian Ming Leichty

64

1

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MS. NEVILLE: We are back on the record and ready
3 to begin.

4 Welcome, Mr. Salume, is it?

5 MR. SALUME: Yes, it is. Good guess. Thank you.

6 MS. NEVILLE: Well, I had some assistance, but
7 thank you and welcome.

8 We are going to begin with the five standard
9 questions. And the first one is: What specific skills do
10 you believe a good Commissioner should possess? Of those
11 skills, which do you possess? Which do you not possess,
12 and how will you compensate for it? Is there anything in
13 your life that would prohibit or impair your ability to
14 perform the duties of a Commissioner?

15 MR. SALUME: Well, I'll start off by saying that I
16 do not consider myself a redistricting specialist, but I
17 do have what I believe are many of the skills that are
18 required for a Commissioner.

19 I think what a Commissioner should have in his
20 toolkit is the ability to listen, to understand, to
21 understand what is said, and also to understand the
22 meaning behind data. I realize that there is a great deal
23 of data analysis in this position and I think I am more
24 than qualified educationally and through my background to
25 understand it. The ability to work on a team, I've done

1 that on the Grand Jury, and I've done that as a member of
2 our elected School Board in our community, and in a number
3 of other capacities, volunteer capacities, over the years.
4 Some Management experience; I ran two small businesses
5 successfully years ago and I've also served as a manager
6 and an executive. To work well in a public meeting, I
7 have sat where you all sit right now and chaired meetings,
8 and so I actually feel more comfortable on that side of
9 the table than this one, but I've done that. I have
10 demonstrated impartiality. In public office, I think a
11 Commissioner has to be impartial considering all the
12 competing interests that may come into play.

13 And ultimately you have to be decisive and you
14 have to make a decision, and I really believe that if
15 you're going to stay on track, and I think the schedule is
16 eight and a half months, you're going to have to be
17 decisive and you're going to have to make decisions. And
18 I think I've, in my public service career up to date, I
19 have demonstrated all those capabilities.

20 As far as any impediments or impairments to my
21 completing this position, and serving as Commissioner, I
22 can't think of any. At the moment, I am completing a
23 Masters Degree right now, but the class meets one night a
24 week and it is not onerous. I completed another degree
25 last year and I did that while serving on the Grand Jury,

1 and it was very successful, I was able to do both without
2 a problem.

3 MS. NEVILLE: Describe a circumstance from your
4 personal experience where you had to work with others to
5 resolve a conflict or difference of opinion. Please
6 describe the issue and explain your role in addressing and
7 resolving the conflict, and if you are selected to serve
8 on the Citizens Redistricting Commission, tell us how you
9 would resolve conflicts that may arise among the
10 Commissioners.

11 MR. SALUME: You know, the first thing that comes
12 to mind is my Grand Jury service, but I have been
13 cautioned by counsel not to describe the specific
14 deliberations. But I can tell you that, when you get 19
15 people together on a Grand Jury, you're going to get
16 differences of opinions, especially if you get into
17 investigations and writing reports, and all the minutia of
18 trying to write a report and discover the issues. So
19 that, I would love to talk about it, unfortunately I
20 can't.

21 But I will speak a little bit about my School
22 Board experience because I think that's relevant. We had
23 on the San Mateo Coast Side in 1996, we passed a \$35
24 million school bond, and I was one of the Campaign Chairs
25 for that Initiative, and we were successful. And the

1 School Board at the time decided to partner with a
2 developer, and they were going to build in conjunction
3 with some housing. This triggered a long, protracted, 12-
4 year fight in our community. It was covered in the
5 newspapers and I'm sure you can find the details on the
6 Internet. It was an extremely difficult issue, it tore
7 the community right in half because there were some folks
8 who wanted to build a school and suffer what they
9 perceived are the evils of additional development, and
10 there were some folks that did not want to build any new
11 housing, no matter what the benefits were to the
12 community.

13 After about six years of this, I decided to run
14 for the School Board, so I ran for the School Board in
15 2002, I was successful, I served from 2002 to 2006. And I
16 went into this thinking that it was perhaps a project
17 management issue because I had a background in
18 construction management in project management. I was
19 wrong, it was a political issue, it was not an engineering
20 issue, and so I spent much of my time - we had additional
21 public meetings, we had additional information from staff,
22 reports, analyses from experts, personal negotiations that
23 I conducted with property owners to find alternatives to
24 the project, meeting with various factions and
25 stakeholders, I did all that as part of behind the scenes

1 and also in public meetings, as a member of the School
2 Board.

3 Ultimately what we decided to do was rebuild the
4 school in place, so we had an existing middle school, so
5 we took this building, it was an old WPA building, and we
6 retrofitted it to - I'll just keep talking.

7 MS. NEVILLE: I know, we want to capture you,
8 though, so if you want to take a break because we really
9 want to record you and be able to stream, so we will take
10 just a minute.

11 MR. SALUME: Because I can talk louder and let the
12 force of my eloquence -

13 MS. NEVILLE: I really appreciate that very much,
14 your accommodation, but we won't be able to capture it in
15 streaming, so we will take a minute to get the sound
16 running.

17 MR. SALUME: Hi, mom.

18 CHAIR AHMADI: Did you stop the clock, Diane?

19 MS. HAMEL: Thank you.

20 MR. SALUME: I was just warming up to my topic,
21 too.

22 (Off the record at 9:22 a.m.)

23 (Back on the record at 9:25 a.m.)

24 MS. NEVILLE: So, thank you for your patience and
25 we will resume where we left off.

1 MR. SALUME: I will try to remember.

2 CHAIR AHMADI: Did you start the clock, Diane?

3 MS. NEVILLE: I would if I knew how.

4 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: There are two buttons. One
5 stops it completely --

6 MR. SALUME: Well, so we had this long protracted
7 fight - excuse me, debate - in our community. And I
8 conducted negotiations and discussions with a number of
9 the stakeholders. Eventually we decided to re-build the
10 middle school in place and abandon the project because we
11 had - the key deciding factor was that it had been 12
12 years and our buying power was diminishing over time, we
13 had \$35 million and every year we lost roughly \$1.5
14 million in buying power because construction costs were
15 rising and labor costs were rising, so that - we really
16 were forced to make a decision.

17 Actually, if you want to know more about this, I
18 wrote - I had a Political Theory class and I wrote about
19 this in exhaustive detail, I would be happy to give you
20 the paper. I got an A in the class, I got an A on the
21 paper, and the professor was actually fascinated by this
22 for some strange reason, and so I did...

23 I have another issue, we had a conflict with
24 appointing a Principal at our high school and the
25 Superintendent didn't really get along with the choice

1 that was favored by staff and the parents, and it was the
2 strife between the two parties was very strong, so, as a
3 Board member, I argued to stretch out the process, we
4 instituted a formal selection committee, and the entire
5 purpose of that was to find the best candidate, but also
6 to allow the parties to become more professional, give
7 them enough time to calm down and back off a little bit,
8 and that actually worked, and they mended fences, and we
9 had an excellent outcome with selecting our Principal.

10 So, sometimes when you manage, you have to hold
11 the problem in suspension for a little while to let cooler
12 heads prevail, I suppose. And I believe that's it.

13 MS. NEVILLE: Third question: How will the
14 Commission's work impact the State? Which of these
15 impacts will improve the State the most? And is there any
16 potential for the Commission's work to harm the state?
17 And if so, how?

18 MR. SALUME: You know, I did what I always do, and
19 when I looked at this question, I went straight to
20 Wikipedia. And Wikipedia says, I wish I had written this,
21 Wikipedia says, "In addition to equalizing the populations
22 of Districts and complying with the Federal requirements,
23 criteria may include attempting to create compact,
24 contiguous Districts, trying to keep political units, and
25 communities within a single District, and avoiding the

1 drawing of boundaries for purposes of partisan advantage
2 or incumbent protection." I wish I had written this.
3 This is beautiful, and this really describes the essence
4 of what the job is for me.

5 But, I will add one thing that isn't covered in
6 Wikipedia, and perhaps I'll make that addition later, a
7 good redistricting outcome should not be seen just from
8 the voter's perspective, it should also be seen from the
9 candidate's perspective. If the job is done correctly,
10 what you may have - hopefully what you may have is
11 qualified candidates who may be shut out of the process or
12 don't have a real good chance to rise to elective office.
13 You may open up the process a little bit, and you may have
14 folks who normally, in the old model, not rise to public
15 office, but with successful redistricting and true
16 reflection of the voters' intent, you may have new fresh
17 blood in elected office. And I think that's a very
18 important outcome, to me, considering that I've also run
19 for political office, I'm sensitive to that issue.

20 Ultimately, redistricting, I think, is about
21 putting in place leaders who can accurately represent the
22 people. But the mechanisms of selecting our leaders is
23 really an approximation. It's an attempt to aggregate the
24 idea of one person, one vote, into a representative
25 governmental framework. And it's difficult to absolutely

1 reflect - in my experience - it's difficult to absolutely
2 reflect the intent or the will of the voters, but
3 ultimately when you elect somebody, what you want to do is
4 mirror the voters' intent, not necessarily reflect every
5 single opinion they may have on a particular issue. So,
6 that's a little more challenging, it's a real fine line,
7 but I think sometimes that a leader may have to take a
8 position that is at odds, temporarily, with the
9 constituency. A successful redistricting process would
10 allow us to get leaders who would be willing to do that, I
11 think.

12 And harm? I think malapportionment would be a
13 real issue; rounding errors would be a problem. I think
14 the redistricting work that the Commission does is really
15 a snapshot in time, and whatever process is done has to
16 have legs over the 10 years that the Districts would be in
17 place until the next go-round. And so, I would really
18 like to see some sense of what the future is and how this
19 is not just a snapshot, but something that has value and
20 is valid over time. So, that's the kind of framework if I
21 was appointed as Commissioner, that's the kind of
22 framework I would - I would take the long view and think
23 of things not just for this year, or next year, but for
24 five years and perhaps 10 years time. So....

25 MS. NEVILLE: Describe a situation where you had

1 to work as a part of a group to achieve a common goal,
2 tell us about the goal, describe your role within the
3 group, and tell us how the group worked or did not work
4 collaboratively to achieve that goal. If you're selected
5 to serve on the Citizens Redistricting Commission, tell us
6 what you would do to foster collaboration among your
7 fellow Commissioners.

8 MR. SALUME: Well, I've done the Grand Jury, and I
9 mentioned that I can mention that. But we did produce 16
10 reports and I think there was a very strong showing, 16
11 reports, and one letter, and my opinions are actually - my
12 success in working it as a group is reflected in those
13 reports because I touched on almost every single one of
14 them and I wrote sections, huge sections of some. And I
15 managed to help make some of the other reports, some of
16 the other efforts of the other Grand Jury members more
17 effective, I think, through editing and contributions, and
18 asking good questions.

19 The middle school, I've already talked about how
20 difficult and intractable that problem was, and possibly
21 some of the reason why I have some gray hair today. Come
22 to think of it, I don't think I had much gray hair before
23 I was elected to office.

24 I am working right now on an initiative in our
25 community to shift the voting for our City Council from

1 odd years, off year elections, to on-year elections. I've
2 worked with a coalition of folks that are from the various
3 political factions and community and, in fact, I wrote the
4 ballot argument for it, I wrote part of the initiative
5 itself. It was a collaborative effort from folks who do
6 not normally agree or work together on anything, and I -
7 we submitted our ballot argument and you can have five
8 signatories backing up the argument, and the document is
9 amazing because the five signatures are two former - or
10 four former Mayors, both representing the two far extremes
11 of the political spectrum in our little community and, of
12 course, my own signature, I suppose I'm the mortar between
13 the bricks, but that was very interesting, very
14 challenging, we gathered 1,100 signatures working at
15 Farmer's Markets and in front of Safeway to gather
16 signatures and educate people, and it's going to be on the
17 ballot for this November, and I'm actually very proud that
18 we could do something that was apolitical.

19 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

20 MS. NEVILLE: A considerable amount of the
21 Commission's work will involve meeting with people from
22 all over California who come from very different
23 backgrounds and very different perspectives. If you are
24 selected to serve on the Citizens Redistricting
25 Commission, tell us about the specific skills you possess

1 that will make you effective in interacting with the
2 public.

3 MR. SALUME: When I sit on that side of the
4 table, I consciously try to put people at ease. I believe
5 that you get the best kind of input when people are
6 relaxed.

7 When I conducted Grand Jury interviews, I would go
8 out of my way to make people feel open and safe, and I
9 tried to listen as long and as carefully as I can to what
10 people are saying. I really try to understand and I ask
11 questions. I suspend judgment until the facts are in.
12 It's so easy to jump to a conclusion. I try to wait until
13 everyone has had their say before I jump in with my own
14 particular take. And I encourage others to do that.

15 You know, I grew up in a first generation Hispanic
16 household and I do have an appreciation for how our
17 political systems need to bring in those who are new to
18 our voting and representative processes. And I think I
19 use that to an advantage.

20 Let me see, I think I've covered the question.
21 Have I missed anything?

22 MS. NEVILLE: No, thank you very much.

23 MR. SALUME: Thank you.

24 MS. NEVILLE: We will now begin with Mr. Ahmadi's
25 20 minutes.

1 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes, thank you. Good morning, Mr.
2 Salume.

3 MR. SALUME: Good morning.

4 CHAIR AHMADI: I want to apologize for the
5 technical difficulty, sorry about that.

6 MR. SALUME: No, no, I'm a technical guy and,
7 believe me; I understand that, so I'm forgiving.

8 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you very much. You answered
9 one of the questions that I had in regards to your
10 availability. If I heard you correctly, you are going to
11 school one day a week next year?

12 MR. SALUME: One evening a week and I'm taking
13 classes right now.

14 CHAIR AHMADI: Do you think that's going to be a
15 problem for you if -

16 MR. SALUME: No, no, it's a Wednesday night
17 program and, as I mentioned before, I did my - I completed
18 another degree last year, and I did my Grand Jury service
19 while I was doing that. I was a full member of the Grand
20 Jury. I think I only missed one meeting and it was an
21 illness.

22 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay, thank you, sir.

23 MR. SALUME: Sure.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: I just wanted to clarify that. In
25 your application, you mentioned that motivation is to

1 promote - your motivation is to promote good government
2 through commitment to public service.

3 MR. SALUME: Quite so.

4 CHAIR AHMADI: Could you please tell us how the
5 Commission will be instrumental in promoting good
6 government?

7 MR. SALUME: The interface of the public - I'm
8 going to tell you what you already know - the interface of
9 the public is really the mechanisms of voting, and every
10 public service opportunity that I've had has dealt in some
11 way with voting and getting opinions from the public, and
12 translating that into successful policy and outcomes.

13 I worked as an Election Inspector and Judge for
14 the last 12 election cycles, the School Board as an
15 elected official, and the Grand Jury as an appointee, and
16 the Grand Jury, especially, was about the functions of
17 good government, making the processes actually work.

18 But, to make the processes work, you have to have
19 engaged citizens. That is how it works. And unless
20 people are voting and have a sense that they're
21 represented, there's a break in the contract of trust, so
22 I'm - that's really where I'm coming from, from this. I
23 think I've answered the question.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes, thank you, sir. Looking back
25 at your experiences, you have worked as Election Inspector

1 and also as a Judge.

2 MR. SALUME: Yes. Election Judge.

3 CHAIR AHMADI: Election Judge. How does that
4 experience benefit you with your work as a Commissioner
5 should you be selected? What are some of the lessons that
6 you learned from that experience?

7 MR. SALUME: Well, I should back up just a little
8 bit because I actually have an interest in the mechanisms
9 of Democracy and how they meet technology. Some of my
10 work in school has been based on electronic voting and how
11 we take traditional voting methodology and employ
12 technology to it. There is the Help America Vote Act and
13 the machines that have come in, the datasets that are
14 involved, so I've done some of that, and that was one of
15 my motivations for becoming an Election Inspector, besides
16 running fair and efficient elections.

17 But I'm personally interested in how elections
18 work and I've written papers on this, too. And I would be
19 happy to give you some of my academic work. But the
20 Commission, it seems to me that this is so -- what the
21 Commission's work does is so seminal, so important to the
22 process of representative government. If you don't have
23 Districts and representation where someone's vote actually
24 counts, where it's not discounted or disvalued through a
25 malappropriation or a bad construction of District

1 boundaries, that's something to be avoided. So...

2 CHAIR AHMADI: Thanks again.

3 MR. SALUME: Sure.

4 CHAIR AHMADI: In your experience as the School
5 Board Trustee, you mentioned that you were able to balance
6 competing student interests, or student needs, with
7 special interest groups. Could you please tell us about
8 the specifics of what you mean by special interest groups,
9 and how did you balance, and what factors affected your
10 decisions?

11 MR. SALUME: You know, when - every time I - when
12 I do a public service position, when I volunteer for a
13 public service position, what I try to do is - I'm going
14 to try to give you an idea of how I think.

15 CHAIR AHMADI: Sure.

16 MR. SALUME: What I try to do is come up with some
17 basic criteria and, so, when I ran for the School Board, I
18 narrowed it down to three things, which is every decision
19 was measured by these three criteria, we would educate the
20 children, we would watch the money because you couldn't
21 educate the kids without having a firm fiscal foundation,
22 and in a small community you have to offer extra value, so
23 the parks and recreation - the recreational facilities of
24 the school become community assets when school is not in
25 session, so you try to offer some extra value. So those

1 were my three criteria. Every single issue that I had as
2 a School Board Trustee was measured against those three
3 criteria, the selection of the middle school, budgeting
4 issues, there were times that there isn't enough money in
5 the pot, and are you going to lay off a teacher, or get
6 rid of some advanced placement classes, or a counselor?
7 So, I - and each of these positions has a lobbying group
8 from the community that's - you'd have to do that and come
9 up with the best possible alternative. It's extremely
10 difficult to do. So, have I answered your question?

11 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes, thank you, sir. So that's
12 what you mean by special interest groups?

13 MR. SALUME: Oh, totally - totally. And that and
14 then some.

15 CHAIRPERON AHMADI: Thank you, sir. You have a
16 unique background. When I look back at your application,
17 you mentioned that you did not speak English, or you spoke
18 Spanish and from the age of five and, of course, you have
19 the advantage of being exposed to a diverse group of
20 immigrants, you mentioned. How does that benefit you in
21 your work as a Commissioner, should you be selected?

22 MR. SALUME: Well, I grew up in a Hispanic
23 household. My mother was born in Puerto Rico, and my
24 father was born in El Salvador. And, in fact, my father's
25 family originally came from Bethlehem in Palestine back in

1 the 1920s, and so we're a Catholic, Arabic family by way
2 of Latin America, so I think I get points for diversity
3 for that. And on top of it, my wife is Jewish! You want
4 to talk about - I have reserves of charm and diplomacy I
5 haven't even tapped yet that I've used in the political
6 sphere, as well. I really understand how people get their
7 start in this country.

8 When I first ran for the School Board, I told my
9 father I was running for office and he looked at me and he
10 said, "You know, this is crazy," he said, "We don't do
11 that. We concentrate on our families and we concentrate
12 on our business, and we vote, we're good citizens, but we
13 don't get involved in Politics." So, I have a sense of
14 how long it takes for a generation, a couple of
15 generations, to really start participating in the American
16 Dream and political participation. And I've seen it
17 firsthand. So, that's one of the perspectives I'll bring
18 if I'm selected as a Commissioner.

19 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay, thanks again. You also
20 indicate that, even as a teen, the idea of empowering
21 citizens who had no voice, or political voice, through
22 education, organization, and voter registration appealed
23 to you.

24 MR. SALUME: It did.

25 CHAIR AHMADI: In your opinion, how do these

1 things empower citizens and, if selected, how would you
2 use your role as a Commissioner to do this?

3 MR. SALUME: You know, I think I trace my
4 political awakening to high school. Cesar Chavez came in
5 after hours, he gave a talk, and I was very taken with
6 what he had to say, and I ended up spending three years of
7 my free time picketing Safeway; now, I shop there. But
8 picketing Safeway in support of the boycott, and getting
9 involved in all sorts of stuffing envelopes and all sorts
10 of things, so I did that in high school, and that was the
11 first real time I really got involved in politics at all.
12 And it really opened up my world. And I had a sense of
13 what social justice should be, I had a sense of how a new
14 immigrant, a new citizen, may not fully understand, or may
15 not fully be able to participate through cultural bias, or
16 through not having the mechanisms available to actually
17 participate in our government, and selecting our leaders
18 and voicing their concerns. So, from an early time, it
19 really affected me. Is there something else you'd like to
20 ask as far as a follow-up? But that's generally where I
21 come from on this.

22 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, I appreciate that.

23 MR. SALUME: Sure.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: What type of property - I'm
25 searching here about your current work-related question -

1 what type of property do you own and manage? Are these
2 issues related to either you, your role as an owner, or as
3 a tenant?

4 MR. SALUME: I have several investment properties,
5 single-family homes. We had a - back in 2000, we had a
6 piece of property that had been in our family for years,
7 and so I sold it and I started buying single-family homes,
8 property, and so I have several properties out of state
9 that aren't covered in Form 700, so I didn't list those.
10 And I have two properties that are actually in Sacramento.
11 And they're single-family homes, they're occupied. I have
12 a Management Company that deals with the specific
13 management of these issues, and I don't consider myself a
14 speculator by any means, or a real estate developer, but
15 they provide income and it's just a personal investment,
16 that's it.

17 CHAIR AHMADI: So is that the reason why you left
18 the IT environments about eight years ago?

19 MR. SALUME: Well, actually, I've - if you look at
20 my - if you look at my record, I started doing a lot of
21 public service around 2001. And I remember 9-11, and I
22 was working in a successful start-up at the time, and what
23 I decided to do was I wanted to do some public service, I
24 wanted to get back to the community, I thought that was -
25 I was a little too old for the military, and I believed

1 that I had sufficient skills and talent to devote to the
2 community. So, I started doing public service. I was
3 Committee Chair for a Cub Scout troop; I was an Assistant
4 Boy Scout troop leader. I ran for the School Board. I
5 served on a number of committees. I've been an Election
6 Judge. And so this is part of the phase in my life,
7 that's one of the reasons I submitted an application,
8 because I have the urge to contribute to society, and this
9 is what this particular phase of my life is all about -
10 and going to school and getting A's.

11 CHAIR AHMADI: Right, that's great. Thanks.

12 MR. SALUME: You're welcome.

13 CHAIR AHMADI: What laws do you think the
14 Commission must consider when redistricting?

15 MR. SALUME: What laws?

16 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes.

17 MR. SALUME: Well, there's the Voting Right Act,
18 Sections 2 and 5 that deal with minority representation,
19 and I think that's really important. I, uh, as far as
20 laws, well, gerrymandering is allowed by the law, I'm not
21 in favor of gerrymandering, I prefer, I suppose, more
22 mathematical purity if we were laying out boundaries. The
23 Help America Vote Act, of course, that doesn't deal
24 specifically with Districting, it's more about the
25 mechanics of voting, as I read it. Uh, I think that's

1 pretty much it. There's a number of laws on the book that
2 cover - cover this issue.

3 CHAIR AHMADI: Could you share with us your
4 thoughts on gerrymandering, you mentioned?

5 MR. SALUME: I think that there may be instances
6 where, over time, the boundaries of Districts have morphed
7 out of all logic and they perhaps may not reflect the - if
8 we were starting from scratch, they would look a great
9 deal different.

10 And I don't have any specific models in mind,
11 examples in mind, though there are a few Congressional
12 Districts that looked rather bizarre on the face of it.
13 If you look at the - they cross boundaries of bodies of
14 water, and things like that, that is somewhat troubling.
15 But I would favor an approach that would deal with
16 boundaries that actually made sense as far as what the
17 populations are.

18 CHAIR AHMADI: Could you elaborate on that, what
19 factors will contribute to that decision-making when you
20 are redrawing the lines? Because you mentioned something
21 about, if I heard you correctly, you said that if you
22 started all over again, that the lines would look totally
23 different, or somewhat different.

24 MR. SALUME: You know, they might. We just had -

25 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

1 MR. SALUME: Okay. We just had a Census and I'm
2 sure it's going to show new information about areas of
3 growth. We've had - you know, we really have to get into
4 the data about this because there's - we've had an
5 economic downturn for the last several years, we've had
6 people leave the State, we've had areas that are - I think
7 the unemployment rate is somewhere in the neighborhood of
8 12 percent right now. We have pockets of economic
9 distress throughout - this is reflected, actually, in
10 voting patterns and how people move, and how immigrants
11 populate areas, and how they turn over. I was born and
12 raised in San Francisco and - it's dead again [mic].

13 CHAIR AHMADI: We have a technical difficulty
14 again. Could you please stop the clock? We're going to
15 take a minute break.

16 (Off the record at 9:52 a.m.)

17 (Back on the record at 9:53 a.m.)

18 CHAIR AHMADI: We are back on the record. Sorry
19 about that.

20 MR. SALUME: All right. As I was saying, I grew
21 up in San Francisco, I was born and raised in San
22 Francisco. And I have seen -- in the Castro, as a matter
23 of fact -- and I have seen so much in the way of just
24 neighborhood change, demographic change, so I have a sense
25 of how just my particular neighborhood has changed over

1 the last 40-50 years. So, you know, I've seen that first
2 hand. So, I think if that experience is reflective of
3 what's going on in the rest of the State, then having a
4 redistricting process that lasts - that happens every 10
5 years may not be soon enough, you may have to have it
6 every five years, or sooner.

7 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay, thank you, sir. How much
8 time do I have left?

9 MS. HAMEL: You have two minutes - two and a half
10 minutes.

11 CHAIR AHMADI: Just real quick, could you please
12 tell us, what are your thoughts about the geometric shapes
13 of the Districts?

14 MR. SALUME: Geometric shape, well, my favorite
15 geometric model is - and I think the globe should be
16 reflective, a soccer ball with the little hexagons, that
17 would be perfect. I do not expect to turn, if I am
18 appointed, to turn California into a network of hexagons;
19 that would be unrealistic. But as far as preconceived
20 shapes, it would really have to be based on the data. And
21 actually, how the populations are actually configured, and
22 the make-up of the populations. And I'd like a sense of
23 what their voting behavior was over time. I - that's
24 really all I can give you.

25 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay, thank you, sir. I appreciate

1 it. I have no more questions at this point.

2 MS. NEVILLE: Ms. Camacho, your 20 minutes.

3 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. Hello, Mr.

4 Salume. Salume?

5 MR. SALUME: Salume.

6 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Salume. You discussed a
7 little bit about the changing demographics in the Castro
8 District. I have a question that's kind of related to
9 that.

10 MR. SALUME: Okay. I haven't lived there for 25
11 years, but every once in a while I go to dinner there.

12 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. What advantages of a
13 diverse and vibrant population of immigrants has brought
14 to California? Can you describe -

15 MR. SALUME: Well, the State was - the State was
16 built on, as I recall California history, the State was
17 built on a nation of immigrants, from the first records, I
18 think, what was the book? *Two years Before the Mast*,
19 where the fellow talks about what California was like just
20 before the Gold Rush, our State has really changed. My
21 family is an indication of how the State has changed and
22 how we've welcomed and incorporated immigrants into our
23 experience, and into our civic functions. I've seen a lot
24 of changes as far as - as we all have - as far as how the
25 State is - how minorities are represented.

1 I think, in some respects, California is actually
2 a leader in this area. I think trends as far as
3 representation and Equal Rights are really vetted first in
4 California, and then they get to the rest of the Country,
5 as I read the newspapers. And I think that's all to the
6 good. I think -- I have no problems with it, I think
7 that's fabulous. I think we're on the cutting edge of
8 freedom.

9 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Now, with all these diverse
10 populations and stuff, obviously you have them in your
11 school District -

12 MR. SALUME: Oh, totally.

13 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: What things have you
14 encountered or have you seen with the various populations
15 and demographics within your school District, and how
16 would that help you further understand California?

17 MR. SALUME: When I served on the School Board, we
18 had two - roughly two - populations. And because of these
19 two populations, our policies were somewhat schizophrenic,
20 in my view. We had a population of high achieving
21 generally Anglo students who got excellent grades and were
22 targeted to go to universities like Stanford, and
23 Berkeley, and USC, and USF, my Alma Mater. And then we
24 had - well, the population roughly defined as English
25 language learners, new immigrants, folks who - children

1 from families who were not necessarily engaged in the
2 political process, not all of them were citizens, but if
3 there's a student in the District - or if there's a child
4 in the District, we have to get that student educated
5 without argument.

6 And so, from a School Board perspective, from a
7 management board perspective, we would try to meet the
8 needs of the Anglo students and high achieving students to
9 get them into college, but, at the same time, try to
10 target resources to enable the English language learners
11 and the largely Hispanic families to have the skills to
12 eventually go on to high school and college.

13 We were actually very successful in getting a
14 number of our Hispanic English language learner kids into
15 college; in fact, they're at Sacramento State right now, a
16 few of them, I visited them occasionally. So, it's very
17 challenging. Actually, I think you almost need - it's
18 difficult to do this in the bounds of the law and budget,
19 but it's almost like you need two different
20 administrations, one that is targeting towards college
21 prep, and run as a college prep, and the other targeting
22 resources to kids to bring them up to speed in English,
23 and writing, and mathematics as quickly as possible, and
24 it's very difficult to do in our system. So we do the
25 best we can. So I hope that answers the question, or do

1 you have a follow-up?

2 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I have a follow-up.

3 MR. SALUME: Oh, please.

4 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: How did you identify these
5 needs for these various individuals?

6 MR. SALUME: Ah, this is really - we're a small
7 community in Half Moon Bay. And there's a minimum of
8 social services available. We partner with the county, we
9 have a number of strategic partnerships and coalitions
10 that we try to provide social services, as well as
11 educational services to our students. So, what we would
12 do is apply for roughly a million dollars in grants every
13 year, and these grants were to assist families with
14 translation services, with health services, and things,
15 families that had kids in our school system. And they
16 didn't burden our property taxpayers immediately, these
17 were grants that were readily available, and so we would
18 every year renew these grants and provide additional
19 services to these families, to provide some kind of social
20 safety net.

21 You know, you have to be creative sometimes when
22 you wear a small government official hat - official's hat.
23 And that's one of the things that we would do. You know,
24 I always think in terms of inclusion, and trying to bring
25 people into the system because that's really where I came

1 from. And it's very difficult when there isn't sufficient
2 money to do that, to the level that you would like. But I
3 think we were actually pretty successful in many
4 instances. I hope this answers your question.

5 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: So -

6 MR. SALUME: Please.

7 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: -- did you use the groups
8 that were already out there with these kinds of services -

9 MR. SALUME: Oh, yes, oh yes -

10 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: -- to help you identify these
11 people?

12 MR. SALUME: There were some coalitions that dealt
13 with elder care. We partnered with Affordable Housing.
14 The school District has always been front and center with
15 Affordable Housing issues and making sure - in fact, we -
16 I think it was 10 years ago, no, no, 12 years ago, that we
17 put together an Affordable Housing initiative that's in
18 the South of town, it serves largely newcomers and
19 Hispanic families, and it's very nice housing. We've been
20 front and center with making sure that Affordable Housing
21 is a component of any proposed development to address
22 those needs. If there's mental health issues, there are
23 organizations that deal specifically with that and, so,
24 where appropriate, we try to make sure that those services
25 are available to the families of our students, assistance

1 with tuition, or tutoring, or things like that.

2 There are different groups that specialize in
3 different things. Instead of reinventing the wheel, what
4 we would have to do is - or what we chose to do - is
5 partner with entities at the County, and locally, and
6 nonprofits to make it happen on a case-by-case basis.
7 Clearly, the school District doesn't do everything, but
8 because the school District was in a position where it's a
9 broad umbrella, where it touches many other jurisdictions
10 and functions, we had the opportunity to do a lot of that
11 over the last 20 years.

12 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. Also, I saw in your
13 application, during your School Board, you had to kind of
14 redraw some of the lines.

15 MR. SALUME: Oh, yes.

16 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Why did the School Board that
17 you sat on decide to redraw the attendance boundaries
18 within the school District?

19 MR. SALUME: Well, it - the - let me describe our
20 District. Our District is like a long skinny piece of
21 bacon. We are on the San Mateo Coast and, so, we have
22 schools that are dotting the coast, they're distributed
23 like the pearls in a necklace down the - and so, you have
24 each school, elementary school, in its area, and ideally
25 those kids would be able to go to that particular school,

1 their neighborhood school, and walk to school, or
2 whatever. Unfortunately, you have population shifts. We
3 had - Half Moon Bay was producing a lot of school age
4 children and we'd had Montera, which was to the north,
5 that had fewer kids for a few years coming from the
6 neighborhood.

7 Sometimes we would shift the boundaries based on
8 the cohort studies. Cohort studies are the projection of
9 where the little kids in the family are coming - you have
10 a student right now, the cohorts are the little brothers
11 and sisters who may be coming in, and so we would do
12 projections, very simple projections on where the students
13 would be coming from.

14 Sometimes we couldn't shift the boundaries enough,
15 so we would have to bus children from the south of the
16 District's boundaries to the north of the District's
17 boundaries. I realized that the Redistricting Commission
18 cannot introduce busing for voters, that is something that
19 cannot be done, it's something that we were forced to do
20 because of the geometry or, excuse me, the topography of
21 our particular community. So, I've done a little of that,
22 and I approved the maps and voted on it, and you do the
23 best you can in those circumstances.

24 I wish that all those communities - I wish it was
25 in a pie and we could just shift the boundaries of the pie

1 a little bit, but unfortunately our geography isn't like
2 that.

3 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Was this attendance boundary
4 changes, was that controversial, and if so, what did the
5 School Board do to address the controversy?

6 MR. SALUME: You know, by and large, it wasn't
7 that controversial, though we did have some parents from
8 the school in the north who were concerned about an influx
9 of English language learning kids, and specifically
10 diluting the - it was unjustified - but diluting the
11 quality of the education that their school was offering to
12 the Anglo kids, and some of the Hispanic kids were already
13 there.

14 We met with - we met with the parents, I met with
15 some of those parents, as well, and we reassured them we
16 would do whatever is necessary to maintain standards. We
17 changed Principals on one of the sites, we adhered to
18 testing periodically to make sure that the - extra testing
19 - to make sure that the grade, the performance of the kids
20 on standardized testing was as good, if not better, than
21 it was before. We targeted some English language tutor
22 help for that particular site so that the teachers on site
23 would be supportive, so we did those kinds of things to
24 address the concerns of the grassroots.

25 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: That was - you dealt with, or

1 you discussed the teach - or the families that were in
2 that northern school. How about the families where their
3 kids were being bused to the northern schools? Was there
4 any controversy there?

5 MR. SALUME: You know, not so much, and I think
6 it's because, you know, because I have a Hispanic
7 background, I was up against a cultural issue, and the
8 cultural issue was that there's a tremendous - in the
9 Hispanic community, there is a tremendous amount of trust
10 in officials, and school officials expect it, especially.
11 Principals are called "Directors." Teachers are called
12 "Professors." They - board members are called very nice
13 things. And there is presumption that the experts know,
14 and so I would show up to meetings, along with our
15 Superintendent and other Board members, and we would
16 discuss these issues, but we wouldn't get a lot of input
17 because there was, just culturally, it was a sense of
18 trust. You know, we did our best to honor that trust.
19 Some - I could see where - I could see that this was the
20 residue of the first generation, how the second
21 generation, the third generation would get more active and
22 more vocal in determining their own fate and voicing their
23 own opinions, but the first generation tends not to do
24 that, culturally. It tends to be a cultural bias. And I
25 would do my best to try to address any concerns that they

1 are not talking about, but sometimes the communication was
2 kind of - the input was kind of sparse from that side.

3 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. And do you think the
4 decisions on the school boundaries ultimately were a good
5 one? And if so, why or why not?

6 MR. SALUME: Oh, I think it was an excellent
7 outcome. We were -- coming back to Mr. Ahmadi's point
8 about the law, we are required to have a very diverse - we
9 can't have one particular site that is a dumping ground
10 for a particular minority, that is against the law. So,
11 we're charged not only with balancing the population and
12 resources within our District, but also to make sure that
13 the ethnic mix of students and families is optimal, and
14 that we homogenize, if I can use that term, the children,
15 so that they take advantage, they have full advantage of
16 access to resources throughout the entire District. So,
17 in a sense, we would - we saw this particular issue with
18 the population differences as an opportunity to meet the
19 strictures of the law, and to rebalance some of our
20 population to be in line with the government rules that we
21 have to function under.

22 MR. HAMEL: Five minutes.

23 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. Your interest is
24 the intersection of technology on transitional mechanisms
25 of voting patterns and political affiliations.

1 MR. SALUME: Yes, that's academic speak, I
2 apologize for that.

3 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I plan to use it.

4 MR. SALUME: Thank you.

5 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Tell us more about what this
6 means and how will this knowledge have a bearing on the
7 Commission?

8 MR. SALUME: Okay, I'm going to give you my
9 potential Doctoral thesis right here. So bear with me,
10 I'll keep it very short. I believe that one day we'll be
11 voting from laptops and cell phones. It's only a matter
12 of time. If you buy something from - do your banking on
13 the Internet, buy something from Amazon, eventually we're
14 going to be voting from laptops, from personal computers,
15 and I actually see that when it eventually happens, not
16 if, but when it eventually happens, I see that as an
17 opportunity to really bring more people into the process
18 if we have a voting iPhone app, then I could see more
19 voters getting involved, getting informed, so that's one
20 issue.

21 The other potential Doctoral thesis is the
22 intersection of technology and the interpretation of data.
23 What I mean by this is that there's a lot of old-fashioned
24 tabulated Excel spreadsheet data at the Registrar of
25 Voters, all over the country. And what is eventually

1 going to happen is we are going to need tools that take
2 this tabulated data and put it out in a graphical form,
3 something like Google Earth, where you'll be able to look
4 at political boundaries and put that into voting records,
5 and push it against - or, compare it to Census data,
6 economic data, and make the value of the interpretation
7 through a graphical GIS format more intelligible for the
8 average person. And eventually, in my dream of dreams, is
9 to take the same tools that we use for selecting a
10 President, that the RNC uses, or the Democratic Party
11 uses, very expensive tools, to determine voting patterns,
12 take that and offer it to somebody who is running for Dog
13 Catcher in a small town, hello? Okay, good, just
14 checking. And so, I see the opportunity of using GIS in
15 that fashion. I have a little background in GIS, and so
16 that's kind of the direction I was going with this. And
17 I'm just giving you my dissertation topic. I should write
18 this down; this is marvelous, marvelous stuff.

19 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: With that in mind, do you
20 think that the redistricting could be performed via a
21 mapping system, completely?

22 MR. SALUME: You know, I've thought about this.
23 If we have - I'll try to speed this up - if we have a
24 sufficient - a well-written computer program, we may be
25 able to approximate the functions of the redistricting

1 Commission, but it would bother me a little bit because
2 there is always a point of judgment, and so you need
3 people to - you can't just give this to a machine or a
4 software program, you have to have judgment. This is
5 ultimately a process that involves human beings, and so
6 you have to have people in the process. So, I could see
7 where you would get software or technology doing this
8 function, but, oh, I might have a problem with it. It
9 hurts me to say that with the IT background, but I might
10 have a problem with it. I think human beings need to be
11 in the process.

12 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. Okay.

13 MS. NEVILLE: PANEL MEMBER SPANO.

14 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Did you finish answering
15 Mary's question?

16 MR. SALUME: I believe so, I hope so.

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Oh, okay. I didn't know if
18 you wanted to continue because your time was -

19 MR. SALUME: No.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Because I would give you that
21 opportunity to do so.

22 MR. SALUME: Thank you.

23 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: You mentioned there is value
24 in people in the process. Can you elaborate on that?

25 MR. SALUME: Value as far as?

1 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: In mapping. Not just having
2 redistricting exclusively done by G - by mapping software.

3 MR. SALUME: Oh, it's, well, we're, you know, I
4 think of history and deeming Democracy where they would
5 get everybody together and vote and scream - vote and
6 scream and yell, I'm sorry, I'm still checking this thing
7 - vote and scream and yell, and it would be incredibly
8 difficult to explain that to Pericles or some of the
9 ancient Greeks on how we're going to give this to this
10 little machine, and the machine will determine our fate,
11 and make these decisions for us. Ultimately, I think
12 technology can bolster and support the process, but
13 ultimately this is a human process. This is - Government
14 is a human process. We don't have machines running our
15 lives, though they try. We have - this is - political
16 processes are not mechanical processes, they are not
17 electronic processes, purely, there are human beings who
18 are involved. You need people in the process. People
19 need to be involved, that's just the nature of the beast.
20 So I've gotten over that.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Can you describe for me what
22 factors constitute a community of interest in your mind?

23 MR. SALUME: A community of interest. Well, if I
24 am sitting on your side of the table, it would be a number
25 of people addressing the podium and voicing their

1 concerns, possibly organized in some fashion, and that
2 would be in the domain of a public meeting.

3 A community of interest might be a group of
4 people, or would be, actually, a group of people who share
5 a common ethnic background, a common economic background.
6 Let's say, hypothetical, let's say we were in a mining
7 town, the workers who worked in the mine would be a
8 community of interest, they would be directly concerned
9 not just with issues of society and community, but also
10 interested in economic issues, as well, and the health of
11 their business, and are they going to still have jobs, and
12 are they going to Unionize and things like that. So,
13 those are communities of interest as far as I see. It's a
14 very narrow definition, I am sure there's more examples of
15 what communities of interest may be, based on a whole
16 number of criteria, and sometimes the communities of
17 interest shift, and they intersect, and some sets of one
18 interface with another, enclosed by others, so I take it
19 on a case-by-case basis.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay, thank you. Are
21 communities of interest involving racial or ethnic
22 commonality more important in other kinds of communities
23 of interest?

24 MR. SALUME: Well, that's an interesting question.
25 I actually think that the ethnic - the ethnic and the

1 economic flavors of communities of interest actually
2 intersect, they often coincide, and sometimes they don't.
3 It's sometimes one particular issue in a community of
4 interest, a coalition or a community of interest, rises to
5 the front and there are other issues, as well. So, let's
6 say the primary interest with the group would be economic,
7 then matters of ethnicity may or may not be - they'll be
8 in the background, but they may or may not be a primary
9 concern with this particular issue.

10 Yeah, that's - I think that's fairly - it's just
11 that it's very difficult for me because of my experience
12 in dealing with people, it's very difficult to see them
13 just in one particular way. When I see a student, when I
14 was on the School Board and I saw a student, in some
15 respects you're concerned with an Anglo student or an AP
16 student, or an English language learning student, and you
17 have to deal with them in that way. But, behind the
18 scenes, they could be - there could be an ethnic
19 dimension, a cultural dimension that you kind of have to
20 take into account, as well. I take this on a case-by-case
21 - I'll make the decision based on what's apparent, but I
22 try to be cognizant of what's going on in the background.
23 So, I hope that - I'm trying to give you insight into how
24 I think.

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Well, it gives me some

1 insight, thank you.

2 MR. SALUME: I'm trying to show you how I think.

3 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Sure, it helps. Do you
4 believe that factoring in communities of interest into the
5 decision making of redistricting and drawing new
6 boundaries is important?

7 MR. SALUME: Yes.

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Can you tell me why?

9 MR. SALUME: If you don't have an understanding of
10 what drives and what inspires and motivates and interest
11 the people in a particular area, you may be redistricting
12 in the blind. And so, in a very rough fashion, obviously
13 you are concerned with - you're picking five Democrats,
14 five Republicans, five uncommitted - or four uncommitted,
15 forgive me - so, you have to be cognizant in a very rough
16 fashion, but those political boundaries and those
17 political definitions are not the end all be all, as far
18 as I'm concerned. In my experience, they're not.

19 Sometimes, I've seen - you know, I'll share with
20 you something that I really believe.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay.

22 MR. SALUME: I don't think there's such a thing as
23 a permanent enemy in politics, or in political discourse,
24 there are only permanent interests. So, the challenge is
25 to identify the interest and satisfy those interests. In

1 that context, I have seen alliances shift, political
2 alliances shift, I've seen dialogues between what we would
3 normally define as rival factions coming together on a
4 particular issue, and to limit our perspective as far as,
5 okay, this person is concerned with these issues, and you
6 check off the list, and this person is concerned with
7 these issues, and never the twain shall meet. That is not
8 my experience. That is not the real world that I have
9 seen. So, sometimes you have to be cognizant of not just
10 the strict political definitions or labels and look at
11 some other things in the background. There may be common
12 ground in some areas.

13 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How do you propose to go out
14 to those communities and find that common ground and
15 finding intersection?

16 MR. SALUME: Well, there's public meetings.

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Given that there's 58
18 counties to consider.

19 MR. SALUME: Indeed. I realize that if I was
20 appointed, I'd be signing up for a lot of public meetings.
21 And I've done that before. You have to listen, you have
22 to look at the data because sometimes what people say at
23 the mic, it may be organized, and that's very good, it's
24 nice that they give a nice presentation with their
25 concerns, but sometimes you have to look at the background

1 data, as well. And I would rely on Census data. I would
2 re - in some cases, you know, I would - it's like - it's
3 like if you - sometimes you need a photograph that's very
4 sharp, and sometimes an impressionistic painting will do,
5 but you never try to rely on a Jackson Pollock. When
6 you're looking at these issues, you try to get a feeling
7 for what the reality of the make-up of a community and the
8 concerns of the community are, with a certain amount of
9 granularity. But I'm putting this in engineering terms,
10 I'm sorry, but -

11 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: That's okay. That's -
12 whatever you're comfortable with.

13 MR. SALUME: Thank you. One does one's best.

14 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Let's see, bear with me.
15 Describe the challenges you faced developing the land use
16 planning report for the Silicon Valley Manufacturing
17 Group, and how you resolved any conflicts.

18 MR. SALUME: That was a very interesting project.
19 It was back in 1995. I worked for a company called TRW at
20 the time, and I was their representative to the Silicon
21 Valley Manufacturer's Group, which they produced their
22 first land use report, and I had the advantage of a
23 technical background, and I was familiar with GIS, as
24 primitive as it was at the time, and so I went through
25 lots and lots of data. I think this is the first time

1 that GIS information from these very big systems were
2 brought down to a PC and made available in a report to the
3 population.

4 I spent a tremendous amount of time going to
5 county offices and looking at zoning and data from these
6 offices, from the various cities and counties. It was
7 nine months of hard work, but I did end up writing an
8 article about my experiences doing collaborative
9 engineering work with another fellow from GE, who was - so
10 I do have the distinction of writing some of the very
11 first articles on how to do collaborative work on the
12 Internet, and I realize that's not important for the
13 purposes of the Commission. But, as far as shifting
14 through data, much of that - some of it was policy, but
15 most of it was actually hard shifting through data and
16 making it available in an intelligent format in a report.

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Tell us how you did that if
18 it's not too -

19 MR. SALUME: They had a couple of dedicated
20 systems, Arc View was one, and I was familiar with a tool
21 called AutoCAD and, later, it became AutoCAD Map, and I
22 managed to take the raw GIS data and translate it through
23 a common translator, into something that AutoCAD could use
24 and then use that to generate the graphics in the report.
25 It was a very complicated and very boring process.

1 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Time intensive and -

2 MR. SALUME: It took a lot - I had a charge number
3 for this, yes. They let me work as long as I wanted to on
4 this. I learned a lot.

5 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you see yourself working
6 with lots of data, primarily, if you were selected as a
7 Commissioner?

8 MR. SALUME: Well, I understand that there are
9 staff attached to this, and there are experts, and I am
10 comfortable with reading data and interpreting data, but
11 you know, if you really wanted data wonks, you'd select 14
12 Demographers. This is not the Demographers Commission,
13 this is the Citizens Redistricting Commission.

14 So, I'm comfortable with the data, I understand
15 where it comes from, I have worked with data that is
16 similar, and had to make executive decisions based on that
17 data in past lives, but I think I would have to take a
18 higher - and any Commissioner would have to take a higher
19 level view of the data and get into it, if necessary, but
20 I don't think so, if the data is presented properly,
21 there's sufficient granularity there and detail, it
22 shouldn't be necessary to crunch numbers that much - some
23 numbers, but not that many.

24 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay -

25 MR. SALUME: And I'm guessing.

1 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Sure. You said you
2 collaborated with GE -

3 MR. SALUME: Yes.

4 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How did that go?

5 MR. SALUME: Silicon Valley was huge, so he got
6 the southern part, I got the northern part, and we
7 collaborated with sharing our data and so we had a number
8 of meetings where we made sure that his maps met my maps,
9 not my maps meeting his maps. His maps needed to meet my
10 maps. And so, we worked collaboratively. It would have
11 been, instead of a nine-month project, it would have been
12 an 18-month project if I had done the entire thing by
13 myself, but fortunately I had a friend in another company,
14 and we were able to share the load.

15 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: So, would you consider that a
16 positive group kind of -

17 MR. SALUME: Oh, we had a great dynamic. It was -
18 and this was when we were trying to figure out how - this
19 is in 1995, and we were trying to figure out how to send
20 attachments and read. It was brand new. So, we figured
21 out a lot of that, "Okay, I can attach this file, you can
22 read it this way," things we take for granted now. There
23 were no PDFs, there was none of that, so we had to invent
24 some of this stuff. It was fun.

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Can you describe for me any

1 working work group in your experience working with groups
2 or commissions and boards, if you encountered any serious
3 conflicts or any challenging types of discussions?

4 MR. SALUME: As far as what?

5 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

6 MR. SALUME: Personalities? As far as -

7 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Personalities, and -

8 MR. SALUME: Oh, personalities, of course.

9 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: -- how do you resolve kind of
10 those -

11 MR. SALUME: Personalities is - definitely, you
12 always come across personalities and egos.

13 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Sure.

14 MR. SALUME: And I, you know, I always try to
15 remember why you're in the chair. That to me is - when I
16 ran for the School Board, 3,400 people put me in the
17 chair, it's rather humbling when you have 3,400 people
18 agreeing on anything, and you're there as a result of
19 their vote. And it - I try to serve with that in mind,
20 and one of the things I realized is -- you don't do this
21 as a Commissioner, but one of the things I did as a School
22 Board member is to remind myself of the rest of the
23 community. I would hand out all the diplomas, so I
24 personally handed out about a thousand diplomas in town
25 just to get the feel for what was going on, and the

1 families, work with the - be seen by the families,
2 interface with the kids in a positive way, and it's - when
3 there's a personality conflict, what I attempt to do, if
4 necessary, is to remind my - the person I'm having a
5 conflict, or the person who is having the issue or the
6 conflict, why they're there. And I try to rely on
7 professionalism, a sense of professionalism, and common
8 purpose, and that usually - usually takes care of it.

9 Most people, when they take a job on, I really
10 believe that they try to do a good job, they believe that
11 they're there to do a good job, and the challenge is to
12 find out, okay, what about this particular issue is a
13 concern to you, and then address that particular concern.
14 And 99 percent of the time, I think that's a very
15 successful approach, that's the approach that I try to
16 use.

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you. How many minutes
18 do I have?

19 MS. HAMEL: Three minutes.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. There was a public
21 comment posted that, during your tenure with San Mateo,
22 the Grand Jury performed an investigation involving the
23 placement of District clients. If you're not prohibited,
24 can you tell us a little bit about that experience?

25 MR. SALUME: I know County Counsel is probably

1 watching this right now. Sorry, Mike.

2 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: I know you can't talk about
3 deliberations - or tell me what -

4 MR. SALUME: I will speak in generalities. There
5 was concern and it's reflected in a letter, in a report
6 about District elections, and in our community, we have
7 right now - we have five members of the Board of
8 Supervisors serving in San Mateo, in San Mateo County.
9 They are elected at large, and that is fine, they're all
10 lovely people, we've managed to elect some very fine
11 people to that office; however, because it's at large,
12 it's very expensive to run a political campaign, and so it
13 takes on average about \$250,000 to run for that office,
14 not even to take the office, but to run for the office.
15 If we had District elections, we broke up the five seats
16 into five hard Districts. Campaigning can be restricted
17 to the District, at the District level, and that would
18 reduce the cost roughly by a factor of five to \$50,000.
19 It would also open up the opportunity for more
20 representation at the - we would get people who wouldn't
21 normally rise to that level, who - they would be popular
22 in their own Districts, but they couldn't necessarily draw
23 votes and support money from other Districts.

24 MS. HAMEL: One minute.

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: One minute? Okay.

1 MR. SALUME: So it was a Districting issue and I
2 hope that gives you a flavor.

3 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: It does, it does, I was
4 curious about it.

5 MR. SALUME: And I don't think I've broken any
6 rules, so...

7 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: We'll let you know. No, not
8 to my knowledge.

9 MR. SALUME: Thank you.

10 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: I don't know if I have enough
11 time for this question, but can I throw it at you?

12 MR. SALUME: Sure, please.

13 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you have any political
14 aspirations? You said you ran for Mayor before.

15 MR. SALUME: Uh, no, no. No - Mayor? No, I've
16 never -

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Well, what did you - you said
18 you -

19 MR. SALUME: I ran - I was on the School Board.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: School Board, okay.

21 MR. SALUME: I have no political ambitions, I will
22 say this in public, I have no political ambitions, I have
23 no political axe to grind of any kind, and I'm doing this
24 for pure public service. And I - no, my view is not
25 narrow - in my opinion.

1 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay, thank you.

2 MS. NEVILLE: Panelists, are there follow-up
3 questions at this point?

4 CHAIR AHMADI: I don't have any.

5 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I have one, but I can wait
6 for your questions.

7 MS. NEVILLE: All right, great. Mr. Salume, my
8 first question to you, and bear with me, it's a little bit
9 longer than I would like, but it's a good one.

10 MR. SALUME: Okay, let's go.

11 MS. NEVILLE: As we've discussed here, the laws
12 that apply to redistricting include the U.S. Constitution,
13 the Federal Voting Rights Act, as well as some of the
14 provisions that are set out in the Voters First Act. One
15 of the things that Federal law, in particular the Voting
16 Rights Act requires is that, under certain circumstances,
17 District boundaries may need to be drawn in a way that
18 gives the particular racial or ethnic group the
19 opportunity to elect the candidate of their choice.

20 MR. SALUME: Yes.

21 MS. NEVILLE: Sometimes this means drawing a
22 boundary in a way that looks kind of funny, it looks
23 irregular, geometrically. Are you comfortable with that?

24 MR. SALUME: Yes.

25 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, so to follow-up on that -

1 MR. SALUME: I'm not mentally rigid on this point.

2 MS. NEVILLE: Very good. We've talked a lot here
3 about engaging the public in this process and about the
4 fact that this Commission will be holding a series of
5 meetings. My question to you, though, is whether this
6 Commission should really reach out in ways beyond just
7 holding public meetings, to get individuals who don't
8 normally come to meetings, who aren't all that comfortable
9 participating in the political process, to get engaged in
10 this process.

11 MR. SALUME: As a child of the Internet, I favor a
12 robust Website and perhaps a Blog of some kind where we
13 could get input from the public. You know, I thought of
14 surveys, but surveys are time intensive and they're just
15 difficult. And considering the timeframe, I would have a
16 problem with the methodology of a survey.

17 As someone who has run political campaigns on the
18 local level, there's phone banks and there's calling
19 people, but I think that's of less and less value today
20 because of cell phones and because of answering machines,
21 and so I think the validity of that is somewhat minimal.

22 I actually believe using a robust Website to have
23 people voice their opinions, write, blog, and inform, I
24 think is a good tool, it's not a perfect tool. But it's,
25 you know, it's a very difficult proposition to try to

1 reach people, especially in an age where - and I served as
2 an Election Inspector, and it's frustrating to me that
3 there's huge sections of the community that don't vote,
4 that choose not to engage in the political process, and
5 that's one of the dangers of this. We can try to do
6 outreach, but it has to be really well thought out, and I
7 unfortunately don't have the answer. I have the concerns,
8 but I don't have all of those answers. If you do, I would
9 love to hear it.

10 MS. NEVILLE: You spoke earlier about some of your
11 current work at the local level in an initiative that
12 would change some of the local elections from odd to even-
13 numbered years. And I know that this is kind of a theme
14 in many local governments throughout California -

15 MR. SALUME: We're trying.

16 MS. NEVILLE: -- because it's more cost-effective
17 to have them on the even-numbered year. What I generally
18 heard, or sometimes heard from the elected officials is
19 that some of those who are currently in office are
20 sometimes uneasy because they think it creates the
21 appearance that there's sort of sneaking in an extra year
22 to their term in a way that the voters didn't expect. So,
23 how do you respond to that? How do you deliver the
24 message to the folks in San Mateo County or your City
25 about why you think this is a good idea?

1 MR. SALUME: Well, you know, you necessarily have
2 to have -- either shortened or lengthen a term. We have
3 one what can be described as one perhaps political faction
4 already in control of the city, can you imagine the
5 screams if we wanted to cut their term short a year? And
6 then have another election? We'd have the burden of an
7 extra election and cutting their term short from what
8 their voters originally approved. It makes far more sense
9 to extend their existing terms and, in fact, we have a lot
10 of support from the rival faction that's out of power in
11 order to do this. This is remarkable that we have that
12 kind of unanimity on this particular issue. It's -
13 there's a greater good here. The greater good is, of
14 course, cheaper elections because there's more
15 jurisdictions that share the fixed cost of running an
16 election, and that's great. But the real issue here is
17 greater voter turnout. With this particular issue, I
18 think we have something like almost 31 percent in off-year
19 elections turnout, and we've had an average of something
20 like 70 percent of the voters turn out in on-year
21 elections and even-year elections. So, one of the reasons
22 I'm in it for is to increase, to go, to move the election
23 where the voters are voting, and they're voting in on-year
24 elections, where we have state and we have federal
25 elections that draw people in. So, it's a necessary evil.

1 If someone doesn't want to serve, they're free to appoint,
2 they're free to have another election, but having those
3 inconveniences and disruptions is worth it for the greater
4 good, in my opinion.

5 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, thank you. Just one final
6 thing I wanted to follow-up with you a little bit about.
7 Ms. Camacho was asking you some questions about your work
8 on the School Board, and about some of the issues that you
9 dealt with in providing instructional services to English
10 language learners, and you talked at some length about
11 balancing these sort of, you know, the fact that you have
12 a student population that is Anglo, that is typically
13 college bound, and then this other population of students
14 who are English language learners, and you mentioned a
15 thought that perhaps it was almost necessary to have sort
16 of two administrations, or two ways of dealing with that.
17 Can you elaborate a little bit more on that?

18 MR. SALUME: Two - it's - you know, it's really
19 frustrating because the - I mentioned the schizophrenic
20 nature of the messages that you're sending when we are
21 trying to attract people into the School District, and
22 into our classrooms, "Give us your students to educate."
23 We talk about the high achieving students, the number of
24 kids that have gone on to university and college work, the
25 minimal drop-out rate, things like that, that would appeal

1 to the parents. When we talk to the State, we're
2 interested in getting the ELL funding, the Title 1
3 funding. So, we'll de-emphasize that issue and we'll re-
4 emphasize the issue, but, oh, we have all these kids with
5 special needs and challenges, and we need just a little
6 bit extra cash from the State in order to fund it, so it's
7 almost too different messages that are going on. And
8 that's reflective of the dichotomy, the decisions that we
9 have to - that we're faced with. And in some respects,
10 it's almost you have to remember which group you're
11 talking to, to - "Oh, this is the message I'm talking
12 about right now," "Oh, okay," then you go off on that
13 script. So, I - once you're past talking to each
14 particular group, there remains one particular issue that
15 unites the two, and that's how are you going to service
16 these kids? How are you going to educate them? How are
17 you going to take limited resources and target them
18 towards getting these kids the most opportunity and the
19 most out of their school education? So, that's a very
20 difficult problem and it's aside from the messaging that
21 goes on. And I mentioned, well, it's almost like you need
22 two different administrations, you need two different
23 approaches, you need one team to do this; you need one
24 team to do that. Under the law, that's not legal, so you
25 can't have separate schools, you have to have everyone

1 together and manage the resources as best you can.

2 MS. NEVILLE: Do you actually think it would be
3 optimal, or better, to have separate schools?

4 MR. SALUME: No. I think what would be optimal
5 and better is for us to straighten out our funding and to
6 make sure that the State fulfills its obligations towards
7 educating our kids, and what you have is a fight for
8 diminishing resources, and that's not where we should be
9 in education. We should have schools and classrooms
10 adequately funded, so we don't have to deal with these
11 issues.

12 MS. NEVILLE: So my final question, which is the
13 impossible question in some ways to answer, it ties with
14 that issue of limited resources, you spoke earlier about
15 seeking out this grant funding that you use to help
16 provide some services for some of those English language
17 learner students. In a world where that money wasn't
18 available to you, and you had to make the hard decision
19 between balancing the competing needs of those student
20 populations, how would you have made that decision? What
21 would have guided you? What would have been the guiding
22 principle that would have helped you make the hard
23 decision?

24 MR. SALUME: Now, I come back to my three
25 principles, which is educate the kids, watch the money,

1 and provide value to the community. That's actually the
2 third, which is value to community. But, the first
3 mission is to educate the kids and, of course, watch the
4 money, so regretfully, I would sacrifice some of the value
5 to the - the general value to the community, which is what
6 those grants are if it was not revenue neutral, if it was
7 a real drain on existing resources, and I would always go
8 towards targeting the limited resources to educating the
9 kids, in that particular instance. So, if there was a
10 program that was - we had one program called Community
11 Schools, it was based on the Gardner Program from
12 Stanford, and we had a cooperative - and this decision was
13 made just recently by the current School Board - we had
14 the salary of our Gardner Community School rep paid for
15 part by the County, part by the City, part by the School
16 District. The School District was no longer able to fund,
17 the City was no longer able to fund, the County withdrew
18 its support and they couldn't fund it 100 percent, so we
19 lost that position, and that was - that person was point
20 center for distributing - for managing those programs,
21 that was - so it's tragic, but that's the environment that
22 we're in right now, so hard choices have to be made.

23 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, so I don't want to take up any
24 more time from the panelists. Are there follow-up
25 questions?

1 CHAIR AHMADI: I do have one. Mary, you had one,
2 too?

3 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Yes.

4 CHAIR AHMADI: Go ahead.

5 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Mr. Salume, you were talking
6 about looking at the future in redistricting.

7 MR. SALUME: Yes.

8 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: How would you take the future
9 into account as a Commissioner in drawing the District
10 lines?

11 MR. SALUME: I'd try to get a sense of what a
12 trend was. There's - fortunately, we have a Census data
13 that's coming out, and I imagine that the Census data will
14 be key in determining what the snapshot of the way it is
15 right now. But if there's a trend, if there's a growth,
16 if there's a growth in a particular area, if the political
17 mix, or the ethnic mix, let's say, is changing a
18 particular, or the economics are changing a particular
19 area, the numbers may show that. I realize we're taking
20 10-year slices with Census data, there may be other
21 sources of data that show a more granular year to year
22 perspective, things like some of the data from the LAFCOs,
23 the local LAFCOs and the counties, that might be useful in
24 some extent, I don't know, I'd have to look at it.

25 MS. HAMEL: One minute.

1 MR. SALUME: But it's - what I would try to do is
2 determine, is it a trend? Is it an aberration? Or is it
3 irrelevant as far as the data. And I would really try to
4 look for trends. Is it growing in this particular -
5 because this isn't just a 10-year thing, this isn't a one-
6 year thing, it's got to go for 10 years, so that's the
7 perspective. I hope I answered. Is that close? Or -

8 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: How would you draw District
9 lines based on that when you have the various laws and
10 regulations?

11 MR. SALUME: I would take into account the
12 potential growth in particular areas, or let's say in the
13 last 30 years, the community looked like this, and then it
14 looked like this 20 years ago and it looks like this now.

15 MS. HAMEL: Time. I'm sorry, we're out of time.

16 MR. SALUME: Am I done?

17 MS. NEVILLE: Yes, thank you very much. We are
18 limited to the 90 minutes and we thank you very much.

19 MR. SALUME: Thank you.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

21 CHAIR AHMADI: We will recess until 10:59?

22 MS. NEVILLE: Yes. Thank you very much for coming
23 to see us today.

24 MR. SALUME: Thank you. Thank you for your time.
25 This was fun.

1 MS. NEVILLE: Good!

2 (Off the record at 10:50 a.m.)

3 (Back on the record at 11:00 a.m.)

4 MS. NEVILLE: It is 11:00 a.m. and, Mr. Leichty,
5 am I pronouncing your name correctly?

6 MR. LEICHTY: Yes, that's correct.

7 MS. NEVILLE: Very good. Welcome.

8 MR. LEICHTY: Thank you.

9 MS. NEVILLE: And we are going to get started with
10 the five standard questions. The first one is: What
11 specific skills do you believe a good Commissioner should
12 possess? Of those skills, which do you possess? Which do
13 you not possess, and how will you compensate for it? And
14 is there anything in your life that would prohibit or
15 impair your ability to perform the duties of a
16 Commissioner?

17 MR. LEICHTY: First of all, I'd like to say good
18 morning to all the Panel members and counsel. And thank
19 you for giving me the opportunity to speak with all of you
20 today.

21 I think the most important skills that the
22 Commissioners will need to have are the three that
23 Applicants were asked to write about in their
24 applications, the impartiality, the analytical skills and
25 the respect for California's diverse geography and

1 demographics. Those are the skills that will allow
2 Commissioners to create fair and effective Districts, and
3 faithfully implement the voters' intent with the Voters
4 First Act, and which bring me to another thing
5 Commissioners will need to have, they'll need to be able
6 to - and willing to - faithfully implement the Voters
7 First Act and comply with the Federal Voting Rights Act.

8 In addition, meeting deadlines will be very
9 important, and their ability to speak with the media and
10 interact with the public will also be very important.
11 Skeptics might say, "Is it really possible for anyone to
12 be truly impartial?" And it's a legitimate question, but
13 our society counts, for example, on Judges that are
14 committed to equal justice under the law to be impartial,
15 and Californians are counting on future Commission members
16 to be impartial, and I think that, given the dedication
17 that future Commission members will have to their tasks, I
18 think it will be very possible for them to rise to that
19 task and perform impartially as the law and the public
20 expects them to.

21 I know I'm certainly young, but I bring excitement
22 to the task, and a strong commitment and extensive
23 experience with impartiality, given my three years working
24 for a nonprofit dedicated to impartial education policy
25 analysis in the State.

1 I recently wrote an article for the EdSource
2 Newsletter on some of the governance reforms being
3 considered, given the challenges this State faces, and I
4 certainly had my opinions about all of those, but I set
5 them aside for the article and presented simply the facts
6 on the Constitutional convention proposals being addressed
7 at the time I wrote the article, the California Forward
8 Reform Proposals, and I took my responsibility seriously
9 then, and just presented the details of what was being
10 proposed.

11 With respect to whether or not there's anything in
12 my life that would prohibit or impair my abilities to
13 perform the duties of the Commissioner, I believe there
14 are not. I know that the State Auditor's Webpage says
15 that you anticipate that Commissioners would need to
16 devote themselves primarily to the Commission's work for
17 the eight and a half months starting in January, and if
18 fortunate enough to be selected, I'm prepared and
19 committed to devote myself primarily to that work.

20 I was recently awarded a scholarship to study
21 Mandarin in Taiwan for a year starting in September, due
22 to my interest in furthering my Mandarin skills, but
23 should I be fortunate enough to be selected, I would
24 without hesitation return and take the opportunity to
25 serve the State, as I can further my Mandarin at any time.

1 MS. NEVILLE: Describe a circumstance from your
2 personal experience where you had to work with others to
3 resolve a conflict or difference of opinion. Please
4 describe the issue and explain your role in resolving the
5 conflict, and if you are selected to serve on the Citizens
6 Redistricting Commission, tell us how you would resolve
7 conflicts that may arise among the Commissioners.

8 MR. LEICHTY: Before I started working at
9 EdSource, I spent a year teaching English at a rural
10 elementary school in Taiwan. It was a school of about 200
11 students situated amidst fields on the coast. And I
12 learned a tremendous amount from living and working in
13 another country, and working very directly with people,
14 with residents of that country.

15 And I was paired with a co-teacher, and we were
16 responsible for jointly developing lessons, plans, and
17 delivering instruction, which necessarily required a lot
18 of cooperation and collaboration. And differences of
19 opinion and conflict did arise from time to time. We had
20 different approaches, but we were both dedicated to
21 English instruction for our students. My co-teacher
22 tended to favor drills and listening and repeating, and
23 focusing on those types of methods. I tended to be
24 interested in giving the students opportunities to move
25 around the classroom and practice talking to each other,

1 asking each other questions, and given our shared interest
2 in providing effective English instruction for the
3 students, we were able to coalesce around that and strike
4 a balance between those two conflicting approaches.

5 I think, on the Commission, certainly differences
6 of opinion are likely to arise, but I think, similarly,
7 Commission members are being vetted to ensure that they're
8 dedicated to performing the tasks of the Commission, and
9 I'm hopeful and confident that, as they work through those
10 conflicts, they would also be able to coalesce around the
11 goal of the Commission in drawing Districts in compliance
12 with the Act.

13 I think it's probably likely that differences of
14 opinion would emerge surrounding what exactly it means to
15 respect the geographic integrity of cities, counties,
16 neighborhoods, and communities of interest. And while
17 there is a description of what communities of interest are
18 not defined as in the Act, but it seems like the
19 Commission will need to be exercising discretion in coming
20 to consensus about how to implement those things.

21 But I think, as I said, that as long as
22 Commissioners have the opportunity to get to know each
23 other and work respectfully with each other and establish
24 a framework for how they want to implement the Act, I'm
25 confident that they would be able to work through

1 differences of opinion, which is especially critical,
2 given the consensus required for most Commission actions,
3 the nine votes required for hiring staff, or drawing maps.

4 MS. NEVILLE: How will the Commission's work
5 impact the State? Which of these impacts will improve the
6 State the most? And is there any potential for the
7 Commission's work to harm the State? And if so, how?

8 MR. LEICHTY: I think the Commission has
9 tremendous potential to impact the State. And if the
10 Commission's work is done properly, then there is a
11 potential for a tremendous positive impact on the State
12 because Californians would have for the first time
13 Districts that are set up to allow for fair and effective
14 representation and where, rather than politicians choosing
15 the voters, they're able to choose their politicians,
16 their representatives, and allow for the ideas of
17 Democracy to be more faithfully fulfilled.

18 I think it's - so, if the Commission is able to
19 create that fair and effective representation, then there
20 is the possibility for a tremendous impact to improve the
21 State, particularly with respect to the multi-billion
22 dollar budget challenges that seem to crop up from year to
23 year and the State's education needs, transportation,
24 health care, infrastructure, and all the critical issues
25 facing the State.

1 I think that if Californians have Legislators that
2 emerge from Districts that were created under the Act,
3 then they will be well situated to address those
4 challenges in ways that they have not yet been able to.
5 And, of course, the Commission's work takes on even
6 greater significance if Proposition 20 passes in November,
7 and Congressional Districts are added to its
8 responsibilities.

9 The potential for harm exists if the Commission
10 does not fulfill its mission and mandate and if, for
11 whatever reason, partisan interests prevail. I think
12 that's unlikely given the process that all of the members
13 have to go through, but I think it is certainly something
14 that members should be aware of and actively guard against
15 it as they are making all of their decisions.

16 MS. NEVILLE: Describe a situation where you had
17 to work as a part of a group to achieve a common goal,
18 tell us about the goal, your role within the group, and
19 how the group worked or did not work collaboratively to
20 achieve this goal. And if you're selected to serve on the
21 Citizens Redistricting Commission, tell us what you would
22 do to foster collaboration among your fellow
23 Commissioners.

24 MR. LEICHTY: One of the projects that I'm
25 responsible for working on in my work at EdSource is the

1 Education Data Partnership Website and that site is
2 designed to provide demographic performance and academic
3 data on the State's nearly 1,000 School Districts and call
4 the schools within those Districts to District
5 Administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the
6 general public. The site runs a wealth of data and is
7 managed through these weekly phone calls between different
8 agencies, EdSource, the California Department of
9 Education, and the technical team, currently the Alameda
10 Office of Education. And for that group to work
11 successfully in ensuring that new data is updated and that
12 site enhancements are appropriately created, it's
13 necessary for us to work collaboratively.

14 One of the projects that I was assigned to within
15 that group was helping to develop a charter school, a
16 proposed charter school Website, and while I was working
17 on that, I developed a design for how that site might
18 look, and how it might present data, and then methodically
19 went to all of the other partners and gathered their
20 feedback and tried to incorporate all of their ideas in
21 creating a final proposal for what we wanted the new part
22 of the site to look like.

23 Similarly, should I be selected to work on the
24 Commission, I think collaboration is best fostered when
25 Commissioners are interested and able to speak with each

1 other, and ask each other for feedback, and truly work
2 cooperatively on all of the tasks before them. So, on the
3 Commission, I think that entails, particularly with
4 respect to meeting legal deadlines, that would entail
5 mapping out all the work, figuring out when and how to
6 deal with the counties that require preclearance under the
7 Federal Voting Rights Act, and coming up with a process
8 and schedule, and also systematically identifying areas of
9 disagreement and agreement, so the Commission has the
10 opportunity to work through all of those issues in a way
11 that allows them to meet the deadlines.

12 And another note on deadlines, at EdSource, we
13 have publications that we create periodically throughout
14 the year, so when those publications need to go out the
15 door and get to press, those deadlines are fixed, so I'm
16 comfortable with working with those fixed deadlines, I
17 know how important they are.

18 MS. NEVILLE: A considerable amount of the
19 Commission's work will involve meeting with people from
20 all over California who come from very different
21 backgrounds and perspectives. If you are selected to
22 serve on the Commission, tell us about the specific skills
23 you possess that will make you effective at interacting
24 with the public.

25 MR. LEICHTY: I would bring to the Commission -

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1 I've been fortunate through my work at EdSource to have
2 the opportunity to interact with parents, School Board
3 members, members of the public from all around the State,
4 from rural Districts, suburban Districts, big cities,
5 small cities, and so I would bring that experience
6 interacting with Californians. And I've also had the
7 opportunity to interact with members of the media, and not
8 only interact with them, but do so from the context of an
9 organization that is very careful to ensure that
10 everything sent to the media can't be misconstrued and is
11 a faithful representation of the facts and information
12 being requested.

13 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

14 MR. LEICHTY: So, I think, for the Commission, I
15 think that's going to be extremely important because the
16 Commission is not only going to need to ensure that
17 everything it does is, in fact, transparent and open and
18 scrupulously impartial, but all of the Commission's
19 actions will also need to appear that way to the public
20 and media, and communications with the public and the
21 media, thus, will be very critical in that regard.

22 And when I've been asked to speak on education-
23 related topics by reporters at EdSource, whether it is
24 parcel taxes, California's education funding system, or
25 the federal based competition, I am careful and practiced

1 at just providing the facts.

2 Of course, the other side of the Commission's
3 interactions with the public and the media are not just
4 what the public face of the Commission to those groups and
5 what it says to those groups, but the receiving input from
6 those groups, and I think the Commission will need to do
7 that in a way that's respectful and thoughtful and
8 considers what Californians around the state have to say
9 about what the Commission is doing.

10 And that's another thing that I have experience
11 with and that I consider to be very important. For
12 EdSource's annual education form, we gather feedback about
13 participants, or for participants, about the form and what
14 could be improved, and their thoughts on how it is
15 structured, and I had the opportunity to go through those
16 forms and know what it's like to take that kind of
17 feedback very seriously and use it as an organization
18 moves forward.

19 Also, another part of the very different
20 backgrounds and the different perspectives part of the
21 question, that has also been a part of my work at
22 EdSource, given that people come at education from very
23 different perspectives, we have been looking at what the
24 two different gubernatorial candidates are saying about
25 education and looking at how to present their views in a

1 strictly factual fashion, and so, I think I'm prepared to
2 hear very different perspectives and be thoughtful about
3 them while engaging in the Commission's work.

4 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you. Mr. Ahmadi, your 20
5 minutes.

6 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes, thank you. Good morning, Mr.
7 Leichty.

8 MR. LEICHTY: Good morning.

9 CHAIR AHMADI: I have a few follow-up questions on
10 your responses to the standard questions and I will
11 discuss a few additional questions.

12 MR. LEICHTY: Okay.

13 CHAIR AHMADI: First off, just to be sure that I
14 got it correct, that we heard it correctly, you mentioned
15 that you have a scholarship that you are going to be
16 traveling to Taiwan?

17 MR. LEICHTY: Yes, to Taiwan, that is correct.

18 CHAIR AHMADI: In September?

19 MR. LEICHTY: In September.

20 CHAIR AHMADI: You will be back, should you be
21 selected, you will be back -

22 MR. LEICHTY: I would come back - should I be
23 selected, I would come back as soon as I need to come
24 back, so if it is October, then it would be October. It
25 is an open return ticket.

1 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay, please make sure that the
2 Bureau has your correct address and contact information.

3 MR. LEICHTY: Certainly.

4 CHAIR AHMADI: In response to standard question 2,
5 when you were describing your experiences about these
6 other conflicts, or, you know, the example that you gave,
7 you also mentioned about the potential conflict in their
8 eyes between the Commissioners on the issue of communities
9 of interest. Why do you think that that aspect of the
10 work is challenging? In what ways would that create
11 conflict within the Commissioners, and how would you
12 approach in more detail to resolve it?

13 MR. LEICHTY: I don't know that it would
14 necessarily cause conflict, but I think it is likely that
15 differences of opinion could exist about what exactly a
16 community of interest is. And I think that the Commission
17 would need to be thoughtful and collaborative in coming up
18 with a shared understanding of that. I don't know if it
19 would be appropriate for me to give an understanding of
20 that, given that I think it would need to be something
21 that would come from the group, but I think it is
22 certainly very possible for people to have different ideas
23 about what that means and how important that is.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: Could you share with us some of
25 your thoughts and what factors contribute to the

1 information of the communities of interest?

2 MR. LEICHTY: Well, so the Act says what they are
3 not, and then, with respect to what they are, I think what
4 the Commission would need to look at would be shared
5 identity, shared income status, and shared - other
6 community factors that might exist, possibly age groups,
7 so I think those are probably likely things that would
8 need to be considered as communities of interest of groups
9 and income distribution and possibly communities of
10 seniors and of that sort.

11 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay, thank you. You also
12 mentioned that, when you were describing your experience
13 on the Education Data Partnership Website, what is your
14 role in that?

15 MR. LEICHTY: I'm one of many members of the
16 working group, so we have alternating tasks. I set the
17 agenda and take notes at those meetings, so in that role,
18 I have the opportunity to kind of prioritize and focus the
19 discussion, but it's really kind of a rotating ad hoc
20 thing, depending on what particular tasks are being worked
21 on at any given time.

22 CHAIR AHMADI: Like, for example, how much time do
23 you spend on that on a monthly basis?

24 MR. LEICHTY: I think I spend about a quarter of
25 my time working on that Partnership.

1 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you. In terms of you
2 emphasized on the fact that receiving data from different
3 sources is an important aspect of the Commission's work.
4 Could you elaborate on that, please, and tell us in detail
5 what sort of data would you need, or would the Commission
6 need in order for the successful product, producing a map?

7 MR. LEICHTY: The Commission - the Census data, I
8 think, will need to be the primary source, and then there
9 will be other sources of data necessarily required to look
10 at communities of interest, so I think demographics and
11 income data would also likely be very important to the
12 Commission's work.

13 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you so much. Many of
14 the candidates or Applicants are towards the end of their
15 long careers and with a lot of experience, a lot of
16 experience behind them. You are a fairly recent graduate
17 and just embarking on your life's journey. Even so, you
18 already have an impressive history of volunteering, of
19 internships, and reaching out and helping community. Tell
20 us how you think a person at the beginning of their life
21 experience, such as yours, would work with and be able to
22 complement the Commission in a group setting. How would
23 you, with your background and experience, add value to the
24 Commission as a whole, as a body?

25 MR. LEICHTY: I think I would be able to bring - I

1 bring a perspective of someone who - that would actually
2 come with someone who is at the beginning of their career,
3 and I think, just to clarify, I do certainly -- in most of
4 my positions, I've had co-workers across age groups, so I
5 think I would be able to successfully work with people who
6 are at different stages in their career.

7 And with respect to what specifically I would
8 bring, I'd bring a young person's perspective, a young
9 Californian's perspective, to the work of the Panel. And
10 also the perspective of someone who - I mean, the things
11 that I have been involved in, in my career thus far,
12 primarily, the three years at an impartial education
13 policy think tank, I think, provides a very unique and
14 complementary addition to the panel, given how important
15 impartiality will be.

16 The other very distinguished and impressive
17 Applicants have done many different things and focused on
18 issues from many different areas, but I would come
19 straight at this work from the background of having spent
20 the bulk of my professional work thinking about issues
21 impartially.

22 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you again. You mentioned
23 about, you know, that segment of population of California
24 that is called the young generation. What do you think
25 some of the issues are, including political, social,

1 economic, that they are facing now? And how would you use
2 that information or that knowledge for the purpose of
3 redistricting?

4 MR. LEICHTY: I think one of the - an extremely
5 big issue for young Californians highlighted by the fact
6 that, for now the second time in roughly five years, the
7 State has been sued by advocacy groups over the state of
8 its education finance system, is the State's education
9 system. Of critical importance for California's youth are
10 questions about whether or not their schools are
11 appropriately equipped to help them get to California's -
12 meet California's content standard, and thus help them
13 become informed, active, engaged participants in
14 California's civic life, and California's economy.

15 So, I think that would - knowledge of that would
16 certainly be something that I would bring to the table and
17 would be an informing factor of my work. I don't know how
18 directly it would impact the work of the Commission, given
19 that those issues aren't supposed to - it wouldn't be
20 things that would be directly considered, as far as I
21 understand, but I think, yeah, having that youth and
22 having an understanding of the education challenges facing
23 California students would be a very good thing.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: And how do you think that the
25 Commission would address those issues and hopefully solve

1 those issues for the young generation?

2 MR. LEICHTY: Well, a Commission that is able to
3 create Districts that truly allow voters in those
4 Districts to select representatives, I think, would really
5 set the stage for being able to address that challenge.
6 Yeah, I think, yeah, I think, if anything, I would also
7 bring the understanding that it's of critical importance
8 for the Commission to do its work right so that the stage
9 can be set to have elected representatives that are able
10 to quickly address challenges for California students, as
11 well as the other public policy challenges the State
12 faces.

13 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thanks again. In your
14 application, you state that you have co-authored three
15 editions of your annual School Finance publication which
16 explains California's education budget and, you know,
17 legislative process, and all that. You kind of touched on
18 that in your response to the last question that I had,
19 but, again, tell us more about your finding that when you
20 are doing - when you are writing those reports, or
21 financial reports, I believe they are called in school,
22 finance?

23 MR. LEICHTY: Yes, yes.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: What resources do you use typically
25 and what are the, for example, the most recent finding

1 that you have? Could you tell us a little more about
2 that?

3 MR. LEICHTY: Sure. We take a look at the text of
4 the State Budget Act, as well as education bills passed
5 that impact that; the report has a kind of policy remnant
6 -- component. But given the nature of our work, I mean,
7 yeah, we do have findings, but we don't make policy
8 recommendations.

9 I think the findings from those reports are clear,
10 kind of clearly show the unfortunate state of education in
11 this State right now, given many teacher layoffs that many
12 Districts are engaging in, and so we - in that report,
13 we've reported on data regarding how many Districts are
14 laying off teachers. And some of the other things we
15 include are explanations of how some of the reforms that
16 the Legislature has created to, in part, deal with the
17 budget crisis, such as making a bunch of categorical
18 programs flexible, the programs that had specific
19 purposes, for which the funds had to be spent. In the
20 most recent report, we spent a great deal of time looking
21 at the amounts that were previously spent on those
22 programs and listing which programs had become flexible
23 and how that new system would work, and what it would mean
24 for schools.

25 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay thank you very much. I don't

1 have any questions at this point, anymore questions.

2 MS. NEVILLE: Ms. Camacho.

3 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Hello, Mr. Leichty.

4 MR. LEICHTY: Hi.

5 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: That's impressive that you
6 received a scholarship to learn Mandarin. Do you know any
7 languages? And if so, what languages are they?

8 MR. LEICHTY: I do currently have basic Mandarin
9 conversational skills, so I would hope to further my
10 Mandarin and become more proficient. I don't have skills
11 in other languages.

12 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. I wanted to get a
13 little bit of clarification on the demographic data that
14 you received for your EdSource Website. Is that true that
15 you received demographic information that you put into
16 your Website?

17 MR. LEICHTY: Yeah, we report on - the Website
18 that is done in partnership with the State Department of
19 Education, we receive and report on the information that
20 the Education Department collects.

21 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Do you think, since it has
22 demographic information, do you think some of that
23 information will help you understand some of the
24 information that Commissioners would be receiving?

25 MR. LEICHTY: Yeah, I think that would absolutely

1 be something that would be helpful, experience looking at
2 the ethnic make-up of schools and the types of students,
3 whether or not Title 1 students as a proxy for low income.
4 So, having experience looking at that kind of thing, I
5 think, would be very analogous to the kind of data that
6 the Commission would need to look at in terms of
7 demographics and income for potential districts.

8 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Also, the information that
9 you receive, that's throughout the State of California,
10 and would that tell you, you know, your School District
11 information, would that tell you a little bit more about
12 the differences within California?

13 MR. LEICHTY: Yeah, certainly. Yeah, going into
14 that Website, it's remarkable to see the differences
15 between when you pull up schools in Los Angeles Unified
16 and as opposed to other smaller counties, and look at all
17 the data provided with respect to English learners and
18 Title 1 ethnic groups. There are really tremendous
19 differences throughout our large State.

20 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Can you kind o expand on what
21 those differences that you saw?

22 MR. LEICHTY: Sure. Essentially, some Districts
23 are more homogenous and other Districts are tremendously
24 diverse. And with respect to income and ethnicity, I
25 think, many neighborhoods in the State probably share

1 similar characteristics.

2 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Do you think, with that
3 information that you worked on for probably - was it
4 almost four years --

5 MR. LEICHTY: Almost three years.

6 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: -- almost three -- would help
7 you understand a little bit better what is going on with
8 California? And if so, how?

9 MR. LEICHTY: Yeah, well, having an awareness of
10 what those circumstances and schools are like for
11 Californians, you know, definitely informs my
12 understanding of the education issues, and I think of the
13 State as a whole. And, particularly an area where that
14 arises is the issue of parcel taxes and we've done actual
15 analyses of parcel taxes and the Districts that pass them
16 are typically located in the Bay Area, typically have few
17 English learners, and typically are less diverse. And so
18 I think that's, having had experience looking at that and
19 we have also from time to time created maps with data for
20 publications regarding different education characteristics
21 around the State; so, I think that experience and those
22 kinds of analyses - experience with those kinds of
23 analyses would transfer very well to the Commission's
24 work.

25 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Also, you were talking about

1 working with media and that you just provided the facts
2 because working at EdSource, it is a nonpartisan
3 affiliation that is very useful to the schools and to the
4 communities at large. When you work with media, how is
5 the interaction? And then, also, in addition to that,
6 working with the public, do you work with the public?

7 MR. LEICHTY: Working with the media, it's
8 typically over the phone, and they'll come in - phone
9 calls will come in with questions related to areas that
10 are areas of expertise for me, and so I'll then field
11 those questions if it's information I have at the tip of
12 my fingertips, or if I need to do further research, I'll
13 tell the reporters and get back to them as soon as I can.
14 And then, with respect to interactions with members of the
15 general public, similar. Typically over the phone,
16 typically with education related questions that I'm either
17 able to answer, or do research, and get back to them. But
18 I have other annual forums, have the opportunity to
19 interact with media and members of the public in person,
20 as well.

21 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Can you elaborate on that
22 experience when you met them personally?

23 MR. LEICHTY: Sure. And those experiences are in
24 the context of events, discussing and providing
25 information about education policy in the State; so those

1 aren't typically interactions where they are asking for
2 information that they'd be using to write a story, but
3 those interactions are with members of the public. And
4 media at those events are still helpful for getting to
5 know them and developing, furthering relationships, and
6 informing future interactions.

7 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. I know that you talked
8 about dealing with the school finance, that's a very
9 complex subject just because of all the rules,
10 regulations, where all the money is coming from.

11 MR. LEICHTY: Uh huh.

12 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: How would you use what you
13 learned about school finance to help you deal with the
14 complexities of redistricting?

15 MR. LEICHTY: I would take my experience in
16 looking at Legislation and faithfully describing it to
17 looking very carefully at the text of the Voters First Act
18 and working to faithfully implement it, which is slightly
19 different, in describing versus implementing, but I think
20 the experience, understanding something so complex, would
21 carry well.

22 And on the plus side, the Voters First Act is a
23 lot shorter than the Education Code.

24 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Is there any particular steps
25 that you took to understand the school financing that

1 would help you to maybe not understand the law, but to
2 understand maybe some steps that you would take when you
3 were a Commissioner?

4 MR. LEICHTY: Yes. I don't hesitate to - I like
5 to read the laws and bills when I am working on myself,
6 but I also don't hesitate to ask questions of experts when
7 I need help. We often interact with and ask questions of
8 the impartial Legislative Analyst's Office and so I know
9 the Commission will be hiring staff that I think would
10 probably serve in a somewhat analogous function, and then
11 I wouldn't hesitate to draw on their knowledge and
12 expertise when dealing with the complex legal issues and
13 interpretations that will surely arise during the
14 Commission's work.

15 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: You brought up a good aspect.
16 For Commission work, you will help with consultants, you
17 will have legal counsel, and you'll have staff. What do
18 you see - there are certain - I'm trying to formulate this
19 - there are certain things that you have to do with staff
20 when you are dealing with them, have you ever had any
21 interactions with, like a supervisory manner with staff
22 at your current job, or prior job, or working at school?

23 MR. LEICHTY: I haven't ever had a formal formal
24 relationship where I've been supervising someone, but,
25 informally, I mean, we work very collaboratively, but we

1 also will divide up tasks and so there have certainly been
2 times on certain projects where my relationship with
3 certain co-workers has been similar to that kind of
4 supervisorial relationship where they're helping with a
5 particular piece of something and providing me with
6 something that I'll later look at and ask questions about.
7 So, in that sense, yes. But, formally, no.

8 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. When you were dealing
9 with the experts, when you received the information that
10 they provided, how exactly did you take that information
11 and use it? Or did you look at it to determine if it was
12 usable? And what was that outcome?

13 MR. LEICHTY: I think, yeah, absolutely, it would
14 be extremely important to not just take the information
15 provided by experts at face value, but to assess it and to
16 see if it is in accordance with the Commission's work, if
17 it's truly at the level of impartiality and analysis
18 needed to move forward with whatever particular thing is
19 being looked at. And certainly, when I'm gathering
20 information from experts in my current work, that's
21 something I'm careful to do. There are people who are
22 very knowledgeable about topics, but also come at them
23 with a certain lens or perspective or agenda, and
24 something to be aware of and to watch for.

25 But I think, also, the Commission will want to try

1 very hard to find staff that shares values and are able to
2 provide faithful, impartial analysis, but still some
3 Commissioners will need to look at it even after having
4 gone through that process while hiring.

5 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: During the experience that
6 you had with an expert, you were saying certain
7 individuals you had to have looked at with a particular
8 lens. Do you have experience where that occurred with
9 you, where you had to look at the information and assess
10 it? And if so, can you kind of give me that example,
11 please?

12 MR. LEICHTY: Sure. I'm trying to think of
13 something that would be appropriate to share. I think
14 I'll first try to speak in a kind of general sense, but
15 try to give specifics about a situation, and let me know
16 if that gets at what you're trying to determine.

17 I think, when looking at particular legislation,
18 I've had the opportunity to ask questions of people who
19 authored it, or are affiliated with those who authored it,
20 or have a stake in it being interpreted in a particular
21 way.

22 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

23 MR. LEICHTY: And so, those situations, if dealing
24 with an expert where it's obvious that they have a stake
25 in interpreting it in a particular way would be situations

1 where I've needed to step back and take very extensive
2 knowledge and look at the facts that they've provided, but
3 make sure to separate them from the opinion and the point
4 of view that they may be pushing.

5 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay, thank you. Well,
6 that's all the questions I have right now. Thank you.

7 MS. NEVILLE: Ms. Spano, your 20 minutes.

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: All right, good morning.

9 MR. LEICHTY: Good morning.

10 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Would you describe for me the
11 different personalities and work groups you work with at
12 EdSource?

13 MR. LEICHTY: Sure. It's a small team of roughly
14 15 individuals, and in any group of that size, you'll have
15 a range of personalities and some of them are typically in
16 editing roles and so are very particular about formatting
17 and parts of speech, and how exactly things should be
18 written. And some of the other folks who focus on policy
19 can get very immersed in intricate details of particular
20 issues that are being looked at. And then there are the
21 managers responsible for looking out for the best
22 interests of the organization, itself, and making sure
23 that work moves smoothly. And it's a pretty collegial
24 environment, so there aren't differences of opinion that
25 really emerge often, that stem from personality

1 differences. Everyone has kind of different areas of work
2 that they focus on and different personalities that they
3 bring to it, and different kinds of things they focus on.
4 Some are more details oriented, some are less details
5 oriented. Some are really interested in how we present
6 data and show things on the Web, some are really
7 interested in education legislation. And all of those
8 things kind of coalesce as we work on our mission.

9 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you. Using your
10 experience, have you taken certain steps to lead a group
11 with strong divergent views towards consensus?

12 MR. LEICHTY: I think yes, there have certainly
13 been times on the Education Data Working Group, for
14 example, where there are differences of opinion about the
15 best way to present a data element, or how to describe it,
16 and there have been times where I - and so, during those
17 times, we get all of our views on the table and discuss
18 the pros and cons of the different viewpoints being
19 advocated by different people and by going through that
20 process we are able to arrive at something where we are
21 all comfortable with putting on the Webpage.

22 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you have any bad
23 experiences where you've encountered conflict in groups
24 and how you handled that?

25 MR. LEICHTY: I think that there are certainly

1 times when I've experienced challenges, but I have a
2 pretty even personality and demeanor, and I don't get
3 easily ruffled, I think. So, yes, just like any normal
4 person, there are times when differences of opinion or
5 conflicts bother me and I try to ensure that I keep them
6 professional and keep them in the appropriate space to be
7 dealing with and addressing with them.

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you. You mentioned you
9 looked at precinct level data in your experience -

10 MR. LEICHTY: Yes.

11 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: -- and when is it necessary
12 to look at precinct level data during redistricting, in
13 your opinion?

14 MR. LEICHTY: I don't think that precinct level
15 data, at least not election result precinct level data,
16 would ever be appropriate for the Redistricting Commission
17 to look at.

18 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: And why do you say that?

19 MR. LEICHTY: Because, well, that project that I
20 mentioned working on was for the purpose of looking at
21 election results and whether or not they would be
22 different, and the Commission is not tasked with looking
23 at election results, and should not be looking at election
24 results or considering that in any way, shape, or form, in
25 creating Districts.

1 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How would you defend your
2 redistricting work on this Commission if challenged?

3 MR. LEICHTY: Well, I would - I think it's
4 probably likely that the Commission's work would be
5 challenged, so should I be fortunate enough to serve on
6 it, we would need to point to the process that we went
7 through, and defend our rationale for how we made all of
8 our decisions.

9 And I know that the Commission needs to produce a
10 report that does that, so I think that would certainly be
11 a resource, but in terms of doing that, we would explain
12 the process, explain the rationale, if there were a
13 particular commenter asking about it, or challenging the
14 process, something that I think might be valuable to do
15 would be to walk them through maybe a particular District
16 that was drawn, and help them to fully understand what
17 went into that and why we came out with the decisions we
18 came out with.

19 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you. How do you feel
20 about your work as a Commissioner being highly visible and
21 closely scrutinized by the public and media?

22 MR. LEICHTY: I think that's certainly something
23 that all of the Commissioners will have to be prepared for
24 and live with. I don't think it's something that any
25 person would say that they're enjoying or looking forward

1 to, but I know that it comes with the territory and I'm
2 prepared to accept it, and use that public space to
3 present the Commission's work in an accurate and fair
4 light for the public.

5 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you. What are the
6 demographics of Edison High School, the students and
7 teachers.

8 MR. LEICHTY: Edison High School was a very
9 diverse high school that I had the opportunity to attend.
10 It was roughly - I think it was roughly evenly divided
11 among the four major ethnic groups and is so because it
12 was originally set up as a magnet school and the student
13 population is designed to be such through desegregation
14 efforts.

15 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: And what was the makeup?

16 MR. LEICHTY: If I'm remembering correctly, yeah,
17 so roughly split between African-Americans, Latinos,
18 Caucasians, and Asians, with I think slightly higher
19 numbers of Latinos and Caucasians.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: What are the demographics of
21 your friends, would you say?

22 MR. LEICHTY: I think - I work - I keep in touch
23 with a number of friends from high school to this day, so
24 in that sense, I would say they are reflective of the high
25 school I attended. Where I work in Silicon Valley, the

1 demographic mix is different, so I don't have the same
2 opportunities as often to be in as diverse a space as I
3 had when I was in high school, but I make an effort to be
4 in diverse spaces and have the opportunity, as I mentioned
5 in my application, to be part of a program that focused on
6 Asian-American and Latino nonprofit professionals in
7 Silicon Valley, so I found that to be very valuable.

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you. Describe the
9 challenges you faced working with the Edison High School
10 Site Council and how you resolved any conflicts.

11 MR. LEICHTY: I will do my best to remember the
12 specifics, since I guess it was between four and six years
13 ago, now. But the conflicts, as I discussed, conflicts
14 emerged because we were dealing with money, and trying to
15 figure out the best way to allocate funds for programs for
16 the student body as a whole and, as I mentioned, some
17 members of that Site Council advocated for some groups and
18 some advocated for others. So, as we were making our
19 decisions about what kind of site plan and basically
20 budget to pass for those categorical funds, we talked
21 about all those issues and I asked other members what they
22 thought and why they thought the way they thought, went
23 through the dozens of pages of the site plan in advance at
24 meetings, and talked about the different ways we could use
25 funds, and we - and so, by going through that process, we

1 were ultimately able to settle on something that we were
2 able to agree upon.

3 And then, I think another - I didn't write about
4 this, but we also had the opportunity during that time to
5 deal with figuring out how to spend the short-lived
6 Governor's Performance Awards that money allocated to
7 schools based on test scores, and for that, I brought
8 forward to that group information regarding how much we
9 could anticipate receiving and proposed a process of
10 serving students regarding improvements they'd like to see
11 more and how they'd rank them, I think some of them were
12 eating areas, picnic tables. And so we ultimately had
13 students vote on how to spend some of that money and then
14 also decided to allocate that money, a portion of that
15 money, to teachers for them to spend on their classrooms.

16 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Describe your role and
17 responsibilities as a Commissioner in making redistricting
18 decisions that provide a meaningful voice to California's
19 diverse communities, to the greatest extent possible.

20 MR. LEICHTY: I think that's done through looking
21 at the data and working collaboratively with the other
22 Commissioners, looking at the statutory priorities, and
23 the order in which all of the requirements that we need to
24 meet are to be prioritized, and then looking at that data
25 with the lens of how can we group these cities, counties

1 and neighborhoods and communities of interest in a way
2 that allows for that fair and effective representation.

3 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you. You examined what
4 you described as controversial bills dealing with the
5 State's response to the Fed's Race to the Top Competition.

6 MR. LEICHTY: Uh huh.

7 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: What research did you
8 perform?

9 MR. LEICHTY: I looked at the text of a number of
10 the State bills that were proposed and voted on. I also
11 looked at the Federal legislation. I spoke with experts -
12 I spoke with an expert in Washington, D.C., a lawyer in
13 Washington, D.C., who was familiar with the Stimulus
14 package and the Race to the Top, legislation as I was
15 doing research, and then ultimately created an article for
16 our Webpage that summarized pertinent facts about the
17 different bills that were passed in the run-up to
18 California's Race to the Top application, and also
19 discussed things from the Federal level, the perspective
20 of how the Federal program was set up, as well as how the
21 judging was going to work, and what criteria they were
22 going to score applications based on. So, kind of
23 spelling out all those details in an easy to understand
24 way.

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Based on -

1 MS. HAMEL: I am sorry, five minutes.

2 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Based on your conclusions,
3 why were these bills so controversial?

4 MR. LEICHTY: Well, speaking personally and not as
5 a representative of EdSource, I think that the bills are
6 controversial because they get at very contentious areas
7 of disagreement that occur in California education policy
8 between groups of teachers unions, groups that are
9 interested in charter school reform, and I mean, those are
10 the two major groups that are often presented as being on
11 opposite sides. But I think there are other perspectives
12 that come into play, as well.

13 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you think the basis for
14 these controversies reflects citizen concerns for
15 education in California?

16 MR. LEICHTY: I think the basis for the
17 controversies may sometimes reflect citizen concerns and
18 may sometimes reflect the concerns of what are often
19 described as interest groups. I think it would be ideal
20 if, instead of the Legislative agenda being driven by one
21 interest group or another, regardless of which side you
22 stand on in that particular example I gave, if the
23 Legislative agenda was driven by citizen concerns,
24 instead. And I think that that is also something that
25 would be enabled by fair and effective representation

1 provided by the Act.

2 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you. Describe for the
3 panel the issues you are aware of regarding public
4 confidence in the integrity of the redistricting process.

5 MR. LEICHTY: Well, there are a number of issues.
6 There are the two competing ballot measures on the
7 November ballot, one of which would abolish the
8 Commission, and one of which would add the responsibility
9 for Congressional Districts. And the Act itself was
10 pushed by good government groups, the League of Women
11 Voters, Common Cause, and so I think I'm certainly
12 familiar with - the question was?

13 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you want me to repeat it?

14 MR. LEICHTY: Could you?

15 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Yes, I could. Describe for
16 the panel the issues you are aware of regarding public
17 confidence in the integrity of the redistricting process.

18 MR. LEICHTY: So, I guess those are issues less
19 related to the integrity of the process, but more to the
20 future of the process. The integrity of the process, I
21 think the public has a right to be concerned about whether
22 or not the Commission will be able to faithfully execute
23 the Act, and I think the public has certainly been very
24 involved and very watchful of the process of the
25 Commissioner selection has gone forward.

1 MS. HAMEL: One minute.

2 MR. LEICHTY: I have spent time with the public
3 input that is provided on regulations and those concerns
4 will be important to address.

5 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: I have another question, but
6 I can wait until you are done since I only have one
7 minute.

8 MS. NEVILLE: Whatever you would like. Feel free
9 to go ahead if you want.

10 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: We have hardly any time, so I
11 will wait until we have time if that's okay. Thank you.

12 MR. LEICHTY: Thank you.

13 MS. NEVILLE: Mr. Leichty, I just have a few
14 questions.

15 MR. LEICHTY: Sure.

16 MS. NEVILLE: I was, like Mr. Ahmadi, I was really
17 intrigued by your public service background, and I wanted
18 to ask you a little bit about your experience when you
19 were at Brown University and see from your resume that,
20 while you were there, you did an internship at the Rhode
21 Island Department of Children, Youth and Families. I'm
22 from the East Coast, so I know that the Brown University
23 Campus and that department and the people it serves are
24 worlds apart, those are different worlds.

25 MR. LEICHTY: Yes, certainly.

1 MS. NEVILLE: Tell us about that. Tell us about
2 your experiences at Brown, what you encountered when you
3 went there as a student, and tell us a little bit about
4 your internship with the Department and who you worked
5 with.

6 MR. LEICHTY: Sure. That internship resulted from
7 a class I decided to take called Children and Public
8 Policy, where we spent a lot of time looking at really
9 rather heartbreaking stories about how - about how Child
10 Protective Services were and how foster care and foster
11 parenting were. So, as a result of that, I had the
12 opportunity to intern in the licensing department of the
13 Department of Children, Youth and Families in Rhode
14 Island. And during my time there, I spent time looking at
15 what - looking at the rights of foster children and also I
16 spent time developing, at the request of my supervisor, a
17 handbook about the licensing process and the requirements
18 for caring for foster children, that they then started to
19 use in that process. And as a result of my internship, I
20 also had the opportunity to go on some visits to some
21 licensing visits to homes with social workers, so gone
22 into some of the homes where foster children were, as
23 well.

24 MS. NEVILLE: Tell me a little bit about that.
25 What's that like?

1 MR. LEICHTY: It's emotionally wrenching, it's
2 hard to think about the work that those folks do every
3 day. And I also wondered, yeah, so I'd go into these
4 homes in the context of these licensing visits and met or
5 got acquainted with a little, some of the children and
6 foster parents there, and it provides a glimpse into a
7 very important area that I think it would be better if we
8 focused more resources and attention on.

9 And then, with respect to my time at Brown and
10 experiences at Brown, certainly going from a public
11 diverse high school in Fresno to an East Coast school in
12 Providence, there was an adjustment to East Coast culture,
13 and getting to know, and then learning from the students
14 from backgrounds different from the backgrounds of
15 students that had been my classmates in California.

16 MS. NEVILLE: And how did that turn out for you?
17 Was that a period of adjustment? And how was it
18 different?

19 MR. LEICHTY: I think it was ultimately very
20 enriching to have that chance to meet with and work with
21 academically students from all around the country, and I
22 think it turned out quite well. I got to know and became
23 close with a lot of other students who cared very deeply
24 about the policy issues facing the country, or the States
25 that they were from, and I keep in touch with a number of

1 them who are also engaged in nonprofit work.

2 MS. NEVILLE: We just have one final question
3 because I don't want to take more time away from the
4 panelists, but was there some personal experience that you
5 had in your life, or some kind of pivotal experience that
6 really made you want to go into the world of public policy
7 and public service?

8 MR. LEICHTY: Yes. It was in high school, and
9 observing the disparities that existed in the education
10 provided at my high school between different groups, the
11 students, and more resources focused on the students in
12 the magnet program as opposed to the students who were not
13 in the dynamics of being in an environment where there
14 were sort of two schools, somewhat integrated, but
15 somewhat not, thinking about those issues, I mean, made me
16 really interested in the potential for public policy to
17 address those things and improve situations for
18 Californians. And in high school, I took that interest
19 and had the opportunity to come to Sacramento for a
20 conference of student generalists talking about the high
21 school exiting exam, and whether or not it was fair,
22 students did not have a sufficient opportunity to learn,
23 so that was kind of an early experience that I think
24 shaped my current interests.

25 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, thank you. Panelists, any

1 questions?

2 CHAIR AHMADI: I don't have any.

3 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I don't have any.

4 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: I'm curious, why should the
5 panelists select you over one of the other remaining
6 Applicants?

7 MR. LEICHTY: I think that the skills that I bring
8 to the table and have described would provide an excellent
9 complement to the other skills that would be represented
10 on the panel. I sincerely think that the impartiality,
11 which I've mentioned several times, would be a strong
12 asset. I have the analytical skills necessary to perform
13 the work that the Commission would undergo. I have the
14 appreciation for California's diverse geography and
15 demographics, and come from the perspective of someone who
16 - I would bring all my life experiences having gone to a
17 diverse high school in Fresno, having worked in the Bay
18 Area for this nonprofit think tank. I think all of those
19 things would equip me well to contribute to the work of
20 drawing the Districts that California needs.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

22 MS. NEVILLE: So, if you wish to make a closing
23 statement, you have 13 minutes if you would like to do so,
24 you don't have to take all 13, you can use whatever time
25 you like.

1 MR. LEICHTY: Okay, well, I know that I'm between
2 all of you and lunch, so I won't take all 13. I think in
3 closing I would like to say that I'm really honored to
4 have the opportunity to speak with all of you today. I
5 care very deeply about California and its future, and care
6 very deeply about the implementation of this very
7 important reform, and I would be very honored should I
8 have the opportunity to help implement the Voters First
9 Act, and an impartial fair manner, and in a manner that
10 provides the truly fair and effective representation that
11 is time for Californians to have. Thank you.

12 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you very much for coming to
13 see us today. We will recess and return at 12:59 p.m.

14 (Whereupon, the hearing was recessed.)
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